

Report to the 2026 Synod of the  
Moravian Church—Northern Province  
from

**The Moravian Archives**

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**Highlights since 2023:**

The 2023 Northern Province Synod approved a revision of par. 605 of the Book of Order. The revised par. 605 provides a more adequate framework for the work of the Moravian Archives. After Synod, both the PEC and the board of Bethlehem Area Moravians approved changes of the bylaws of the Moravian Archives. These changes have worked out well for the archives.

During the inter-synodal period we were able to process many collections (such as the records from the Northern Province Synod since 1857, property records of the Moravian Church (1730–1850 various congregations, and agencies of the church). During the past years we have digitized several of our collections, thus providing online access to our holdings. We are also able to receive electronic records from our congregations, boards, and institutions and preserve these for the future.

Since the last Synod, the Moravian Archives received a grant from Bethlehem Area Moravians for the bi-annual Conference on Moravian History and Music and a grant from the Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission to process the records of Bethlehem's General Diacony (1741–1844).

Our regular work is to assist researchers and to catalog and process the collections. In addition, many people request information online or by phone. We serve a large number of non-Moravians, for whom their experience with the Moravian Archives is sometimes their only but always important encounter with the Moravian Church.

A large number of volunteers help us cataloging our book collection, indexing church registers (Moravian Roots), cataloging memoirs, deeds, and photographs, making protective housing for fragile books and manuscripts, and setting up for events.

The Archives continues to host various lectures and other programs, such as a German-English *Singstunde* (together with Moravian Music Foundation and Central Church). Our annual German Script Course, which has been taught since 1971, remains popular. We are now offering most of our lectures and workshops in a hybrid (online and in-person) format, thus reaching many more people outside of the Lehigh Valley.

In our gallery we presented the following exhibits since the last Synod: “The Archival Process: New Acquisitions at the Moravian Archives” and “Bridging Bethlehem: 100 years of the Hill to Hill.”

During this inter-synodal period, the Moravian Archives was involved with the development of two historical walking tours: “Enslaved and Free” and “Indigenous People and Early Bethlehem.” These tours were developed by the Racial Justice and the History committees of Central Church in collaboration with Lehigh University and the Institute for Moravian History and World Heritage at Moravian University. These tours are a contribution to fulfill several of the resolutions of the 2023 Northern Province Synod regarding racial justice, equality, and reconciliation. We consider recognizing the contributions of Native peoples and acknowledging the church's involvement with slavery essential steps toward truth and integrity.

Archives' staff participates actively in professional organizations such as the American Society for Church History, the American Historical Association, the Society of American Archivists, the German Studies Association, and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference.

In June 2023 three members of the Archives' staff traveled to Labrador to present the result of the “Uncommon Bonds: Labrador Inuit and Moravian Missionaries” project in Goose Bay/Happy Valley, Nain, Makkovik, and Hopedale. As part of this project (funded by the Council on Library Resources) 57,191 pages were digitized and included onto the archives' online finding aid.

We continue to publish the *Journal of Moravian History*, a joint publication of the Moravian Historical Society and the Moravian Archives. A second and expanded edition of the Moravian dictionary (in German) by archivist Paul Peucker was published by the Unity Archives in Herrnhut.

In 2010, a fund for scholarships in memory of previous archivist Br. Vernon Nelson was established. During the past years, the Rev. Vernon H. Nelson Memorial Fund has provided several grants to researchers as a contribution toward their expenses relating to their research at the Moravian Archives.

5% of our annual operating budget of \$679,732 (2025) comes from the Provincial budget (\$35,000). During the previous intersynodal period this percentage was 7%. During the year 2025 the total support from the Moravian denomination was \$69,732 (2022: \$73,986) for general operating. This includes financial support from the Northern Province, Bethlehem Area Moravians, the Larger Life Foundation, and the Society for Promoting the Gospel. The amount of \$69,732 comes up to 10.2% (2022: 13.5%) of our operating budget. We are happy to be able to fulfill our mission as the denominational archives without putting a heavy burden on the church's budget. The remaining funding comes from the Friends of the Archives, from endowment income, from grants, from program income, and from sales in our gift shop. By raising additional income the Moravian Archives is able to play a larger role in the church, in the community, and in the academic world. The Friends of the Archives have donated a total of \$243,538 during the years 2023-2025.

Since the last synod records from the following congregations, institutions, and agencies have been transferred to the Moravian Archives:

*Advent, Bethlehem, PA • Berea, MN • Bethany, MN • College Hill, Bethlehem, PA; • Covenant, York, PA • Daggett Moravian Church, Daggett, MI • Ebenezer Moravian Church, Watertown, WI • Grace Moravian Church, Westland, MI • Graceham, MD; • Gracehill, LA • Hebron, MN • Interprovincial Board of Communication (IBOC) • Lebanon, PA • Moravian Open Door, NY • Mountainview, Hellertown, PA • Northern Province, controller • Our Savior's, Altura, MN • Provincial Women's Board • Schoeneck Moravian Church, Nazareth, PA • Watertown, WI*

respectfully submitted,

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