

MORAVIAN MOMENT #33...
THE STRUCTURE OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

The Moravian Church has always operated on the principle of simplicity. Apart from the normal furniture and decoration for particular events, things like ornaments, figurines, statues and the like are not a part of Moravian customs and practices. The structure of the Church from top to bottom is interwoven at every point. In order to fully understand the workings of the Moravian Church, one needs to understand its structure. What then is the structure?

The Unity Synod is the constitutional body representing the whole Moravian Church, where representatives are drawn from every Province and Statutory Institution of the Church. The Unity Synod meets every seven years. During the period between Synods, the Unity Board runs the affairs of the World Wide Moravian Church. The Unity Board is made up of one member from each Province of the Moravian Church and such other members as the Board deems fit to invite. The Unity Board is entitled to meet three times between each Synod or in the Intersynodal period, however, if business demands, the Board may call other meetings, especially in cases of emergency. The next level is that of Provinces. There are 16 Independent Provinces, 3 Affiliate Provinces and 6 Mission Provinces. The Provinces are based on geographical location and size. Within each Province there are Conferences or Districts which helps to decentralize the operations and make administering the Province more effective. Within each Conference or District, there are Congregations.

What are the functions of the Unity Synod? The Unity Synod represents the Moravian Church in all matters which concerns the Unity as a whole.

It decides on official statements of the general principles of the Moravian Church in regard to constitution, doctrine, congregation life and the ministry and then the spread of the Gospel.

It determines matters touching the constitution of the Unity as a whole and to assign to each Province its constitutional rights within the Unity.

It upholds and further the fellowship of the several Provinces as parts of the *Unitas Fratrum* or the Moravian Church.

It determines the boundaries of the several Provinces of the Unity and their respective spheres of work.

It determines spheres of work of the Unity and lay down the guiding principles for such work.

It determines the principles governing the relations of the Unity as a whole and its Provinces to the other parts of the universal Christian Church, and to further the cause of Christian Unity.

It fosters a common responsibility in regard to the problems of contemporary life and to further a spirit of mutual understanding and peace among the nations and the races.

26th August, 2007