

MORAVIAN MOMENT #72

The Ministry of Acolytes

In the Moravian Church persons can serve in different areas of Ministry. There are those who serve in the fulltime Pastoral Ministry, others in the Ministry of Christian Education, Counselling, Music and the like. There are many persons who serve as Lay Pastors, that is, they are not Ordained. They can be given responsibility for a Congregation and can perform with the exception of doing the Sacraments. The Lay Pastor is not paid a salary, but ought to be given an allowance. There is another level of Ministry referred to as the ACOLYTE.

The Renewed Moravian Church has taken from the Ancient Church the title of Acolyte which was one of the seven steps of Ordination and has transformed this into a call of discipleship in the Congregation and Church. Such a call is extended to any brother or sister who carries a particular responsibility in the Congregation or Province who, upon acceptance of the call, is then received as an Acolyte. This takes place in the presence of the assembled congregation by the Right Hand of Fellowship, given by the Pastor and Local Congregation Boards.

An Acolyte's selection should be made by the local Congregation's Board or Boards and approved by the Provincial Board, and his/her reception authorized by the Provincial Board. The Provincial Board has the right to authorize the reception of Acolytes for denominational service. He/she should be a person who exemplifies the teachings of Christ and who is respected by fellow members of the Church. He/she must be a person of integrity and of good character. In addition, the local Congregation must give its blessings to the brother or sister.

The duties may include assisting the Pastor in pastoral duties, special supervision for specific areas of service within the local Congregations, assisting in serving the elements in Holy Communion when an Ordained Minister is present to consecrate the elements and preside at the Sacraments.

The Provincial Board(s) shall have the authority to appoint a qualified person as an Acolyte to serve as Pastor of a specific Congregation. Such appointments shall be for a period of one year. These can be renewed. When an Ordained person is not available for the administration of the Sacraments, the Provincial Board may, after special instruction regarding the meaning and observance of the Sacraments, authorize such a person to administer the Sacraments in the Congregation for the period of time in which he/she has been appointed.

June 8, 2008