

## MORAVIAN MOMENT #95

### **Deacon, the first order of Ministry in the Moravian Church**

In 1745 the **Moravian** Church adopted the system of. Various degrees of pastoral service from the Ancient Unity: acolytes, **deacons**, presbyters, and bishops. The offices of Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops are the only three (3) degrees of orders in the ordained Ministry of the Moravian Church. The Acolyte is an un-ordained person whose life testifies of the risen and ascended. He or she must have a life transforming experience similarly to that of the Pastor. He or she must be a person who exemplifies the teachings of Christ and one who is respected by his or her fellow members. He or she is not ordained, but must live in such a way that Jesus Christ would be seen and known through his or her life.

One is ordained in the Moravian Church to Word and Sacrament. Ordination allows one to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, which only ordained persons are allowed to consecrate. While other members including the Acolyte are allowed to distribute the Bread and Wine, only the Deacon, Presbyter and Bishop are allowed to consecrate the same. Today we look at the Deacon and ask the question, who is a Deacon?

**Deacon** - The first order of ministry of Word and Sacrament with the privilege of officiating at all rites and sacraments except the ordination of deacons and the consecration of presbyters or bishops. The Ordination as a Deacon embodies the understanding of Ministry as service, which underlies all the orders. The newly ordained minister is normally guided and nurtured in establishing his or her work in the ministry by a Presbyter who lives nearby or someone appointed for this purpose by the Provincial Board.

Ordination to the diaconate shall not be conferred until the candidate has completed a prescribed course of study approved by the Synod under the direction of the PEC.

Ministers who have received ordination in other Protestant Churches not recognizing the three (3) orders of the Ministry and who served in the Ministry of the Word and the sacraments and the care of souls, and who have become members of the Moravian Church shall be received as Deacons. However this regulation does not prevent the exercise of discretionary power on the part of the PEC. It is to be noted that the primary role of the Deacon is SERVICE.

*November 23, 2008*