



# THE PROVINCIAL ELDER'S' CONFERENCE

(EXECUTIVE BOARD)

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## THE MORAVIAN CHURCH • Northern Province

Dear friends in Christ,

July 14, 2011

Last month I went to Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia to an award ceremony honoring my Aunt Polly's service and contributions to the school where she and my father attended K-12 school. Since I began my education at a Quaker school I was particularly pleased to be there and see where my father had gone to school. We began the day with a tour of the new LEED certified state-of-the-art science building. We then went to the award ceremony, held in the Quaker Meetinghouse that had not changed since the 1850s. The ceremony began with fifteen minutes of silence – Quaker meeting. This brought back many fond memories of meeting during my early education, and it gave me an opportunity to reflect on the symbolism I had just experienced. All around me, things had changed – the science building, the student body demographic, the city itself. In the midst of all this change, one thing had not changed – the Meetinghouse in the center of the campus and the practice of worship in silence, as together we discerned 'the sense of the meeting.'

I realized this experience could be a metaphor for our lives and ministry. Things all around us do and should change – how we do ministry, the kinds of people to whom God sends us, the style of worship and music, and how we respond to social issues. One thing, however, does not change – the God whom we worship – who is the center, and at our center – in whom we live, and move, and have our being. In our world where so much is changing, whirling all around us—where things shift and threaten to rock our foundation—may we remain centered in what does not change – the triune God, our hope and salvation.

### Restructure

The Restructure Team is almost complete! I am pleased to announce that Alice Sears, a member of Rio Terrace in Edmonton, Alberta, has agreed to serve as chair of the Restructure Team. Alice, who currently heads the VanEs Camp Board, has served on the Board of Elders of the Canadian District (BECD) and on the Board of World Mission. Her professional life involved Nursing Home Administration and change management within that field. Other members of the Team who have agreed to serve are: Canada: Ryerson Christie and Ann Tyrell; West: Matthew Knapp, Alex MacDonald, Christie Melby-Gibbons, and Dawn Volpe; East: Gary Harke, Margaret Wellert, Kip Wolf, (awaiting one more response); At-Large: Judy Kaaua, Justin Rabbach, Dave Bennett, and Betsy Miller. This team will work with our consultant, Dr. Craig Van Gelder. The first meeting is scheduled for September in Chaska, MN.

### Finance

We received our first report and recommendations from the newly formed Finance Committee. Meeting just prior to PEC, Jim Blair, Tina Giesler, Judy Kaaua, Graham Kerslake and Andy Meckstroth reviewed all the financial accounts and made several recommendations to PEC that resulted in consolidating some accounts in the Trust Funds and Project Support Funds. The Finance Committee will be developing the 2012 Budget once it rolls out the Common Ministry Funding Commitments to all congregations. As has been reported earlier, our

budget will be income-based, reflecting the common commitment of all congregations, rather than expense-based from the provincial level. We were pleased to note the number of congregations that are working to offer 100% support in 2011 to receive the blessing of the past due forgiveness policy.

### **Care and Nurture of Leaders**

We were pleased to be asked to provide input to Moravian Theological Seminary as it pursues a complete curriculum revision. We offered some Skills, Knowledge, and Being outcomes that we thought were important for seminary graduates. What would *you* put on that list?

The Youth Ministries Coordinating Team is complete! The Rev. Josh Viste, pastor of Millwoods Community Church in Edmonton, Alberta, will bring together the team of Amy Sue Walter (East), Greg Behrend (West), and Travis Kerslake (Canada) to provide overall coordination of youth ministries opportunities across our province. Youth – stay tuned!

### **Human Sexuality**


Gary Marsh and his Task Force are scheduling regional conversations across the province this fall. Watch for more information from Gary about these important opportunities.

### **Unity and Ecumenical Relations**

I have recently returned from Denmark where we met as the Executive Committee of the Unity Board. This brings together the four regional representatives from around the Unity: Paul Gardner-Caribbean, Frieder Vollprecht-Europe, Lennox Mcubusi-Africa and Betsy Miller-America, plus Jørgen Bøytler, our Unity Business Administrator. Please pray for the worldwide Unity, and in particular, Alaska and Honduras where there are significant conflicts related to governance and worship style. Sam Gray and Judy Ganz from the Board of World Mission will be returning to Honduras at the end of this month to discuss some of these difficult issues. I will be joining Br. Bøytler for further meetings in Alaska. Pray also for new work developing in Haiti and Cuba. Judy Ganz represents us at the Unity Mission and Development Board – a new way for the Unity to review requests for funding new and ongoing ministry initiatives.

May you find some moments of refreshment and renewal in these summer months, to discover anew God's amazing creation and wonder.

Grace and peace,



Elizabeth D. Miller  
President

EDM:glr