



THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE

(EXECUTIVE BOARD)

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THE MORAVIAN CHURCH • Northern Province

July 14, 2011

Dear Partners in Ministry across our province,

At our 2002 Provincial Synod, delegates endorsed the vision of the New Church Strategy Committee to plant 20 churches by the year 2020. It was a bold effort on the part of our small denomination with a long and powerful history of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, wherever the Lord called. In the nine years since that initiative, several servants have responded to God's call to begin the daunting task of planting a church in a place where no Moravians already worshipped. Many of you have been faithfully praying for God's mission to bear fruit through these churches. Still others have supported this work through sacrificial financial support. On behalf of our entire province, I thank those pioneering spirits for their courage and faithfulness and all of you for your prayers and support. You have truly demonstrated what it means to be the Body of Christ.

The work of planting churches has proved to be more challenging and slower than we ever could have imagined. Some plants thrived for a while and then plateaued. Some have struggled from the beginning. Still others are doing well. However, despite the faithful efforts of Brother Fred Lehr, our former Director of Church Planting, the hard work of the New Church Strategy Committee, and the willingness of our planters, the prospect of achieving the goal of 20 churches by 2020 appears less and less attainable. Therefore, with profound thanks for the vision of 2020, and the prayers and work that supported that vision, members of the Provincial Elders' Conference confess that we do not see our way to being able to achieve this goal. In a spirit of complete transparency, we name this fact clearly and formally disband the New Church Strategy Committee as it has been configured. We celebrate, however, that many lives have been touched, souls have come to faith in Jesus, and communities have been blessed by the witness of Moravians.

So, where do we go from here? We continue to provide faithful and robust support to our current plants: The Connection in Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada and Ian and Eileen Edwards; New Horizons in St. Michael/Albertville, MN and Dave Glasser; Zacchaeus Tree in Indianapolis, IN and Rebecca Craver; The Promise in Lewis Center, OH and Darryl Bell; SONrise in Macungie, PA and Kate Dekker and Dave Wickmann; and Esperanza for Bethlehem, PA and Tracy Robinson. We continue to solicit your prayers and financial support for these ministries. We thank God for the leadership of Darryl Bell as Interim Church Planters' Resource Advisor during this time of transition.

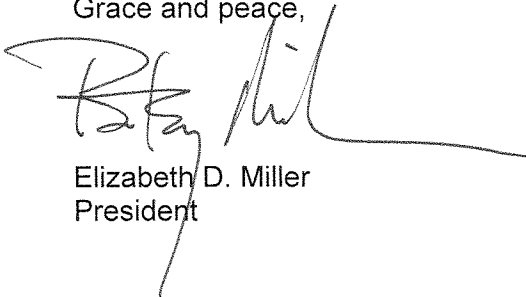
The provincial elders remain committed to the Great Commission and extending God's reign on earth. We continue to explore what it means to be the church today and how God calls us to bear good news in our lives and through the gift that is the Moravian Church. We invite you to prayerfully support the PEC and the wider church as we discern where God is sending us

and how to respond to the needs of today, whether that be through church plants or mission developments. We trust that those within whom the Spirit is stirring will come forward to be part of this yet unfolding vision. If you feel led to embark on a mission development, or to plant a new congregation, please contact me.

During this time of discernment, a subgroup of the PEC (Dave Bennett, Betsy Miller, and Jill Westbrook) will serve as the Management Team of our current plants. Working in cooperation with Darryl Bell, this group will make recommendations to the PEC to provide ongoing support and encouragement to our church planting efforts.

I welcome your comments, feedback, and suggestions about what we have done in the past, our current work, and any future visions you sense God inviting us to pursue. Thank you for being the church and for your continuing care for all the ministries and servants entrusted to our care.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betsy Miller", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elizabeth D. Miller
President

EDM:glr