

The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America

(Northern and Southern Provinces)



In 2009, the General Convention approved “Finding Our Delight in the Lord,” a proposal for full communion between The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces). The Moravian Church approved the proposal in 2010 at its provincial synods. Read the document at iam.ec/foditl.

Who Are the Moravians?

Moravians are a global Christian church with origins in the fourteenth-century Bohemian or Hussite Reformation. With over one million members worldwide, Moravians place a high value on personal conversion to Christ (which they call the New Birth), music, pacifism, ecumenism, higher education, and missionary activities. Like Episcopalians, Moravians organize their ministry according to the orders of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, although there are variations between the two churches in these roles. The Moravian Book of Order is a major guiding document noting acceptance of the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds; parts of the Augsburg Confession; Luther’s Small Catechism; the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; the 1934 Barmen Declaration; and the Reformed Christian Heidelberg Catechism. Moravians practice the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as well as marriage, confirmation, and ordination. They also have a tradition of the Love Feast, rooted in the agape

meals of the early Church—in some American and Canadian congregations, this is celebrated with a sweetened bun and coffee. Moravian Daily Texts are a small popular lectionary in continuous use since 1731.

A Long History of Friendship

Moravian-Anglican relations began in the 1660s in England and were particularly warm in the young United States in the later 1700s and throughout the 1800s. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Church of England and the Moravian Church British Province engaged in a sustained theological dialogue, producing the Fetter Lane Common Statement in 1995. In 1997 the General Convention established an official Episcopal-Moravian dialogue with the Northern Province and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America. The Episcopal Church-Moravian Church dialogue met from 1999-2007. In 2003, the two churches entered into interim eucharistic sharing.

Full Communion

We understand full communion to be a relationship between distinct churches in which each recognizes the other as a catholic and apostolic church holding the essentials of the Christian faith. Within this new relationship, churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous.

Common Commitment to Dismantling Racism

In 2021, The Episcopal Church celebrated the 10th anniversary of its agreement of full communion with the Northern and Southern provinces of the Moravian Church in America, featuring remarks from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, House of Deputies President the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings and Moravian leaders. The traditions of both denominations celebrated the churches' common efforts, particularly joint antiracism work guided by the Sacred Ground curriculum and by Catherine Meeks, executive director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, in the Diocese of Atlanta. In 2021, a Racial Reconciliation Working Group was created to continue this work.

Learn more about the 10th anniversary at iam.ec/10moravian and about antiracism work between our churches at iam.ec/emantiracism.



Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee

The Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee assists in the implementation of the full communion relationship. It carries on the work of reception of the full communion agreement and the use of Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Clergy. MECC is promoting collaboration in work with refugees and other areas of mission through connecting similar ministries in our two Churches.

Visit the Coordinating Committee's webpage at moravian-episcopal.org. Read the Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Clergy at iam.ec/orderlyexchange.



More Resources

Contact the Rev. Margaret Rose, Deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, at mrrose@episcopalchurch.org.

Visit our webpage detailing the relationship between The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces) at iam.ec/moravianepiscopal.

Meet our committee co-chairs: The Rev. Maria Tjeltveit, Allentown, Penn., The Episcopal Church. She can be contacted at revmariat@gmail.com. The Moravian co-chair position is currently open.