

The Moravians

~ Chronology, before 1900 ~

- 1458 The first association of Moravians was formed in Bohemia. After 1458, the church was called either *Jehota Bratrská* ("The Union of Brethren") or *Unitas Fratrum* ("Unity of the Brethren.")
- 1500s By the middle of the sixteenth century there were about 60 congregations located in Bohemia, nearly 90 in Moravia, and eventually 40 in Poland.
- 1618 The Thirty Years' War which started in 1618 nearly exterminated the church.
- 1722 Two families fled from Moravia and found refuge in Saxony on the estate of Nicholas Louis, Count of Zinzendorf. The Count called the people "Moravians" because they had come from northern Moravia.
- 1735 German Moravian missionaries of the pre-Reformation faith of Jan Hus came to Georgia, then in 1740 to Pennsylvania, and in 1753 to North Carolina.
- 1737 Zinzendorf was made a bishop in 1737 and between 1741 and 1744, he established the church in Pennsylvania at Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Lititz, but he failed in an attempt to plant churches in the colony of Georgia.
- 1753 Moravian communities were established around Salem in North Carolina, but they did not succeed. Nor did the church at Hope, New Jersey.
- 1787 The Moravians, active in missions to the Indians, reorganized their society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.

Among the Moravians, all work was considered to be religious with the result that the Moravian communities were driving economic forces. They carried on large-scale agricultural production and practiced numerous trades.

Many other small Germanic sects were established in America, particularly in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. They included the Dunkers, the Shwenkfelders, and the Ephrata Society.

~ Records, Resources ~

The worldwide Moravian Church has 19 provinces, in Europe, North America, Central America, South America, Africa, and the Carribean. 60% of today's Moravians are in Tanzania and South Africa.

In North America, the Moravian Church today is divided into three provinces: Northern, Southern, and Alaska. Its highest administrative body in each province is the provincial synod composed of both ministers and laity.

The American Moravian Church is broadly evangelical, ecumenical, liturgical, and "conferential" in its form of government, with an episcopacy as a spiritual office. The church is committed to education and supports colleges in Allentown, PA, and Winston-Salem, NC.

The Archives of the Moravian Church
41 W. Locust St.
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Moravian Archives
Southern Province of the Moravian Church
4 East Bank St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Moravian Historical Society
Nazareth, PA 18064

~ Bibliography ~

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