

A CHURCH APART: SOUTHERN MORAVIANISM AND DENOMINATIONAL  
IDENTITY, 1865-1903

Benjamin Antes Peterson

A Thesis Submitted to the  
University of North Carolina Wilmington in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Department of History

University of North Carolina Wilmington

2008

Approved by

Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Glen A. Harris

\_\_\_\_\_  
Walter H. Conser

\_\_\_\_\_  
William D. Moore  
Chair

Accepted by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, Graduate School

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| ABSTRACT .....  | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....  | iv  |
| DEDICATION .....  | v   |
| LIST OF FIGURES .....   | vi  |
| INTRODUCTION .....  | 1   |
| CHAPTER ONE – “TO CARE FOR OURSELVES”: A MORAVIAN SCHISM.....                               | 13  |
| CHAPTER TWO – “REVIVALISM AND KINDRED SUBJECTS”: A CHALLENGE<br>TO LITURGICAL WORSHIP ..... | 34  |
| CHAPTER THREE – “BLESSED AND EXTENDED”: MORAVIAN<br>DENOMINATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOLS .....     | 53  |
| CHAPTER FOUR – “PATRIOTIC COMMUNICANTS”: THE MATURE<br>SOUTHERN CHURCH.....                 | 74  |
| CONCLUSION – A CHURCH APART .....   | 96  |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....  | 103 |
| APPENDIX: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.....   | 109 |

## ABSTRACT

Historians have long argued that the Moravian Church's move to the mainstream of Southern Protestantism resulted from the declination of their members' German ethnicity during the antebellum period. The redefinition of the Southern Moravian Church as a mainline Southern Protestant denomination, in fact, came later than most scholars have previously suggested. The Southern Moravian Church came of age after the Civil War when it metamorphosed from a conservative ecumenical religious group dedicated to mission work to a full-fledged mainline Southern Protestant denomination, whose members saw themselves and were perceived by others as legitimate players in the Southern evangelical field. The change occurred over the final 35 years of the nineteenth century, which was relatively quickly given how little the church changed during its initial one hundred years in the Southern United States.

This study explores the reasons for and ways in which the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America adapted to meet the needs of those to whom they ministered. This study covers a broad swath of church activity in the nineteenth century, including political schism and its consequences, the incorporation of revivals into church worship, the adoption of denominational Sunday schools, changes in worship architecture, community outreach efforts, and denominational publications.

This study fills a gap in the historiography between the colonial and antebellum church and the modern Moravian Church, South. The Southern Moravian denomination today owes much of its regional character, religious practices, organization, and traditions to the years covered in this thesis.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply indebted to UNCW faculty members Dr. William Moore, Dr. Walter Conser, Dr. Glen Harris, Dr. Kathleen Berkeley and Dr. David La Vere for their patience and support during the completion of this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr. C. Daniel Crews and Richard Starbuck of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province, Dr. Paul Peucker of the Moravian Archives, Northern Province, Dr. Vernon Nelson, and Dr. David Schattschneider, for their assistance during this project. Finally, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude for the support of my family and particularly my mother, Sara.

## DEDICATION

In memory of Robert W. Woosley, Jr. and Marjorie Antes Peterson

## LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure   | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. Rt. Rev. Edward Rondthaler (1842-1931).....                     | 18   |
| 2. James T. Lineback (1827-1912).....                              | 61   |
| 3. Moravian Sunday schools and preaching places (1896).....        | 69   |
| 4. Calvary Moravian Church.....                                    | 84   |
| 5. Christ Moravian Church.....                                     | 84   |
| 6. Fairview Moravian Church.....                                   | 84   |
| 7. First Baptist Church of Winston (c. 1895).....                  | 85   |
| 8. First Presbyterian of Winston (c. 1900).....                    | 85   |
| 9. St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Winston (c. 1900).....           | 85   |
| 10. Centreville Moravian Church.....                               | 86   |
| 11. Bethesda Moravian Church.....                                  | 86   |
| 12. Mayodan Moravian Church.....                                   | 86   |
| 13. Friedberg's <i>Gemeinhaus</i> (c. 1885).....                   | 89   |
| 14. Friedberg's <i>Gemeinhaus</i> , post-renovation (c. 1900)..... | 89   |

## INTRODUCTION

The Moravian Church in the Southern United States matured into a mainline Southern Protestant denomination following the Civil War. While antebellum disputes over slavery sundered most of the major American evangelical Protestant churches along political, theological, and ideological lines, the Southern Province of the Moravian Church became a separate and freestanding mainline Southern religious body as a result of denominational change that occurred post-1865.<sup>1</sup>

To explain the situation of the Southern Moravian Church during this era, it is necessary to examine the unique history and theology of the Renewed *Unitas Fratrum*, known in the English-speaking world as the Moravian Church. The spiritual origins of the Moravian Church reach back to the mid-fifteenth century when the followers of a Bohemian reformer and martyr, Jan Hus (1369-1415) founded the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of the Brethren) in 1457. Half a century before Martin Luther, the Hussites, as members of the Unity were also known, preached a simplified version of Christianity that challenged traditional Catholic theology. They rejected indulgences and endeavored to translate the Bible into the vernacular. At the center of the Unity's belief was that the Bible was the sole source of religious truth and that Christ, not the pope, led the church.<sup>2</sup> Despite opposition from Rome, the *Unitas Fratrum* expanded rapidly throughout Bohemia and Moravia. By the sixteenth century, it comprised 200,000 members and over 400 places of worship. In the seventeenth century, Rome began to view the Unity as a threat to Catholicism in central Europe. The Brethren became targets of Catholic violence during the Counter-Reformation, and by 1620, the Unity was nearly eliminated. The *Unitas Fratrum's*

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 133-174.

remaining members, including its sole surviving bishop, Jan Amos Comenius, went into hiding. While in exile in Poland, Comenius recorded the tenets of the Brethren's faith in a document which came to be known as the *Ratio Disciplinae*. He also kept the episcopal succession alive in the *Unitas Fratrum* by secretly ordaining ministers until his death in 1670.<sup>3</sup>

The early eighteenth century saw the renewal of the Unity of the Brethren under the guidance and protection of a German nobleman, Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Zinzendorf was a pious Lutheran whose religious ideas were influenced by his godfather, Jakob Spener, the leading voice of Pietism in seventeenth century Germany.<sup>4</sup> In 1722, a group of Protestant refugees from Moravia petitioned Count Zinzendorf for asylum on his estate in lower Saxony. They settled on his land, as did refugees of a number of other faiths, and established a village they named Herrnhut, "The Lord's Watch." Sectarian dissension ensued among the settlers but was suppressed when, on August 13, 1727, they gathered for communion and experienced a powerful sense of the Holy Spirit, often compared to the Pentecost experience of the early Christian Church.<sup>5</sup> Zinzendorf took this as a sign that God wanted him to help reestablish the Unity, and Moravian scholars point to this day as the date on which the *Unitas Fratrum* was reborn. Herrnhut became a communal theocracy in which inhabitants devoted their

---

<sup>2</sup> Elisabeth W. Sommer, *Serving Two Masters: Moravian Brethren in Germany and North Carolina, 1727-1801* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel B. Thorp, *The Moravian Community in Colonial North Carolina: Pluralism on the Southern Frontier* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 12.

<sup>4</sup> J. Taylor and Kenneth G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum, 1722-1957* (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church in America, 1967), 29-33.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*; Scholars continue to debate the connection between the Ancient Unity and the modern Moravian Church, or Renewed *Unitas Fratrum*. Herrnhut was home to a few Bohemian Brethren, but the majority of its residents hailed from Lutheran and other north-European Protestant denominations, suggesting the 1727 renewal was largely a symbolic one.



lives to Christ and received food and shelter in exchange for daily labor. In practice, this meant that the church tightly controlled the economy and residents' social lives.

As long as he was alive, Zinzendorf shaped and directed the renewed Unity. Zinzendorf's theology—if it could be called that—was really a disparate mix of religious ideas skewed by an intense suspicion of formal doctrines. He preached a Christo-centric ecumenical “heart religion” in which faith was matter of feeling, not reason, and salvation was universal for all who accepted Christ. Many of Zinzendorf's religious writings centered on Christ's crucifixion. He was particularly interested in the mystical qualities of Jesus' bodily wounds, which he believed provided physical proof of God's grace. Zinzendorf elevated the wounds of Christ to an object of religious devotion among eighteenth century Moravians.<sup>6</sup>

Moravians continued to reference Christ's wounds in liturgy and hymnody after Zinzendorf's death in 1760. By the 1780s, however, the American branch of the Unity began to retreat from Zinzendorf's theology as a new generation increasingly found the sanguinary language embarrassing. The retreat culminated in the 1790s with the exclusion of the Brethren's infamous “Litany of the Wounds” from the English and German hymnals. By the antebellum period, save occasional lines in a few hymns, the blood and wounds theology largely disappeared from Moravian worship in the United States.<sup>7</sup>

Zinzendorf's vision, and arguably his most enduring legacy in the Moravian Church, was ecumenical heart religion. He never considered the renewed *Unitas Fratrum* a distinctive denomination; instead he saw it as a “church within a church” whose objective was to spread the

---

<sup>6</sup> Craig D. Atwood, *Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>7</sup> Craig D. Atwood, “Zinzendorf's 1749 Reprimand to the *Brüdergemeine*,” *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* vol. 29, (1996): 59-65; Even more striking is Atwood's discovery of American Moravians who, even while Zinzendorf was still alive, were becoming uncomfortable with the bloody imagery in the church. See Atwood, *Community of the Cross*, 10, 225-226.

Gospel to non-believers throughout the world. The Moravians' first organized missionary endeavors grew from this understanding of the Unity's purpose. In 1732 the renewed Unity sent some of its members to preach to black slaves in St. Thomas. Within a few years, Moravians established missions in Greenland, Africa, and Russia. In the 1740s they established their first permanent settlements in eastern Pennsylvania, chief among them, Bethlehem, which directed missionary work in the northern British Colonies.<sup>8</sup>

To oversee this worldwide diaspora, the *Unitas Fratrum* established a central executive body, the Unity Elders' Conference (UEC), in Germany. The executive boards (Provincial Elders Conferences) of the *Unitas Fratrum* in other parts of the world, including North America, became, in the words of one church historian, "mere 'helpers' or agents of the Unity Elders' Conference, appointed by it and responsible to it, not the churches over which they exercised supervision."<sup>9</sup>

In August 1753, the Unity purchased 100,000 acres of land in the North Carolina Piedmont and named it "Wachovia" in honor of Zinzendorf's lands in Austria. The first settlement party was sent from Bethlehem to Wachovia in October of the same year to survey the land and formed the first community, Bethabara. Moravians established two other villages in Wachovia (Bethania, 1759; Salem, 1766) known as *Ortsgemeinen*, or congregation towns, based on the theocratic model of Herrnhut and like those established in Pennsylvania in the 1740s.<sup>10</sup> *Ortsgemeinen* were closed societies in which only full members of the Unity resided. In addition

---

<sup>8</sup> Douglas H. Shantz, "A Church Ahead of its Time: The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Moravian Community on Gender, Worship, and Ecumenism," *The Hinge* vol. 12, no. 1, (Spring 2005):14; Hamilton et al, 41-89.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 168.

<sup>10</sup> Bethlehem, the Brethren's main settlement in Pennsylvania, also used this model. For an examination of its theocracy, see Gillian Lindt Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds: A Study of Changing Communities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

to *Ortsgemeinen*, in Wachovia, Moravians established *Landegemeinen*, or farm congregations, which consisted of congregants living on dispersed farms leased from the church. Because members of the *Landegemeinen* were of diverse ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds and were spread out over many miles, church authorities had less control over their daily lives. Moreover, full membership in the church was not a prerequisite for membership in farm congregations. Members of *Landegemeinen* made up more than 50 percent of the Moravians living in Wachovia. Well into the antebellum period, the largest North Carolina Moravian settlement was the farm congregation of Friedberg.<sup>11</sup>

The central board in Herrnhut directed the church towards mission work rather than the numeric growth of the denomination, and therefore the Southern Moravian Church grew relatively little between 1753 and 1860, establishing only seven congregations in the 94 years following the founding of Salem.<sup>12</sup> Trade was the primary means of contact between Moravians and those outside their religious communities in antebellum North Carolina, and church authorities were careful that commerce took place in the controlled environments of the *Ortsgemeinen*. Thus, the German-speaking Moravian Brethren of the congregation towns were willing to trade with outsiders, but not live or worship with them. Those who knew little about the Brethren except what they observed in the *Ortsgemeinen* characterized the denomination as an ethnically German religious sect.

This perception has survived virtually unchallenged to the present day.<sup>13</sup> Scholars of Moravianism have contributed to this thinking by citing ethnicity as the primary distinguishing

---

<sup>11</sup> S. Scott Rohrer, *Hope's Promise: Religion and Acculturation in the Southern Backcountry* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>12</sup> David A. Schattschneider, "The Roots of the Contemporary Moravian Church in North America," *The Hinge*, vol. 12, no.1 (Winter 2007): 38; Crews, 786, 830.

<sup>13</sup> Schattschneider, 30.

characteristic of the *Unitas Fratrum* in America. Most studies portray North Carolina's Brethren as cloistered Germans who were slowly assimilated into Anglo-American society by the mid nineteenth century. Historian Jerry Lee Surratt, for example, argues Salem was an insular Old World-style Christian theocracy in the 1770s that slowly declined into a secular town by 1860. He notes that in the 1850s membership in the church became a matter of individual choice, as in other American denominations. Salem's Moravians, armed with republican notions of religious freedom, limited the church's authority to spiritual matters by the Civil War.<sup>14</sup> A close variant of Surratt's thesis is that the Brethren's assimilation was generational. Scholars like Elisabeth Sommer and Terry Pickett argue that after the original German-born and German-speaking leadership in Salem died, American-born, English-speaking Moravians adopted a social and religious environment akin to that of other Southern communities.<sup>15</sup>

Historian S. Scott Rohrer offers a slightly different view of Moravian assimilation in *Hope's Promise*. He argues that the Moravians' bond was a shared approach to evangelism, rather than a common cultural or national ethnicity. The Moravians living in antebellum North Carolina, he observes, were not predominantly German but hailed from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and by 1860, interactions between German, English, and Scots-Irish

---

<sup>14</sup> Jerry Lee Surratt, "From Theocracy to Voluntary Church and Secularized Community: A Study of the Moravians in Salem, North Carolina, 1772-1860" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1968), 7.

<sup>15</sup> See Elisabeth W. Sommer, *Serving Two Masters*; Michael Shirley, *From Congregation Town to Industrial City: Culture and Social Change in a Southern Community* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Terry H. Pickett, "Secularization of a Theocracy: The Moravians in North Carolina," *Tamkang Journal of American Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, (Fall 1987): 7-24. Because for the Moravians the spiritual and practical were connected, these studies also assume any social transformation would result in religious change. See also Jerry Lee Surratt, "The Role of Dissent in Community Evolution Among Moravians in Salem, 1722-1860" *North Carolina Historical Review* 52 (July 1975): 235-255; For the characteristics of American denominations, see Sidney Mead, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America*, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1963), 96.

Moravians brought the North Carolina Brethren into the mainstream of Southern society and American Protestantism.<sup>16</sup>

The historians cited debate the speed, causes, and degrees of religious assimilation within the Southern Moravian experience, but agree that the Civil War marked the end of the process. For the study of Moravian acculturation in the American South, the Civil War is an artificial and flawed endpoint. To date, there has been little scholarly interest in the Southern Moravian Church in the second half of the nineteenth century. Only two monographs document this era. Both were commissioned by the Moravian Church and authored by ordained Moravian clergy. Neither provides substantial analysis of the historic record and, like many official church histories, tend toward hagiography.<sup>17</sup>

The changes that occurred in the Southern Province after the Civil War had a substantial impact on the development of the modern Moravian Church, South. As Southern Moravians emerged from the destruction and economic depression of the Civil War, they developed a religious identity that closely approximated that of their Southern Protestant neighbors in sight, sound, and ideology. The move towards a version of Protestantism like that of other Southern denominations exacerbated a religious divide between the Southern Moravians and their northern Moravian brethren. By 1900 the worship traditions, organizational structure, lay participation, and evangelical commitment of the two provinces were so different that each often looked and felt foreign to the other.

Evaluating religious change is a difficult task. When doing so, scholars must decide what constitutes a denomination and if changes in worship and customs represent actual religious

---

<sup>16</sup> Rohrer, *Hope's Promise*, xxxi.

<sup>17</sup> See C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck, *With Courage For the Future: The Story of the Moravian Church, Southern Province* (Winston-Salem, NC: Moravian Church Southern Province, 2002), and Hamilton et al.

changes or are superficial indicators of societal change. Scholars must also make certain assumptions when dealing with these issues, such as the prevalent idea that the Southern Protestant religious experience was different than that of Northern Protestants in nineteenth century America. This study assumes the validity of this understood difference.<sup>18</sup>

The first chapter of this thesis examines a political schism within the North American branch of the worldwide Moravian Church. The Northern and Southern arms of the North American Province of the *Unitas Fratrum* did not split over slavery as did so many American denominations in the antebellum era. Historians have overlooked the significance of the Moravians' membership in the worldwide *Unitas Fratrum* when considering their acculturation into the American Protestant mainstream. From the outset, the central PEC in Herrnhut perceived the North American Moravian Church as one body with Northern and Southern districts. Because Salem and Bethlehem were nearly 500 miles apart, Herrnhut established separate advisory committees for each. This was a practical rather than cultural decision. In 1857, the General Synod of the worldwide Moravian Church granted autonomy to the Southern and Northern America PECs in their local affairs, as long as their policies did not conflict with the general constitution of the *Unitas Fratrum*.<sup>19</sup> As part of a complex international religious federation, North American Moravians were accustomed to receiving direction from a distant and foreign central body. This hierarchy protected them from a variety of influences that encouraged individual religious expression in America. During the antebellum period, North Carolinian Moravians thought of themselves as the Southern District of the North American

---

<sup>18</sup> On homogeneity among Protestants in the American South, see Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); and Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> Crews, 316.

Church. Between 1869 and 1884, they attempted to formalize this close working with their Moravian brethren in the Northern District. These actions resulted in a series of proposed mergers.<sup>20</sup> As North American Moravians continued to seek ways to consolidate their relationship politically, their regional differences grew more pronounced, negotiations grew more complex, and their attempted merger failed.

The failed merger constituted a de facto schism, one that had lasting implications for the development of the Southern Moravian Church. Schisms, whether doctrinal or political, are defining points within denominations, and their end results are usually the same: two branches where there was previously one. The schism between the Northern and Southern branches of the North American Moravianism was political, but was understood by church members to be ideological. Whereas before the Civil War the Moravians North and South had been of a common religious mind, in the years following the war, profound changes led the provinces to conclude that it would be best for each to govern itself.

The second chapter examines the postwar Southern Moravian interest in and adoption of revivalism. A popular evangelistic tool among Southern American Protestants, the religious revival became a standard practice in the Southern Moravian Province after an acrimonious debate between country and Salem town congregations during the Synod of 1865. Moravian revivals were initially found only in the country congregations as the more liturgically-oriented Salem congregations shied away from this unfamiliar worship style. Rural Moravian congregations wanted to incorporate revivals into their worship for several reasons— to bring back disaffected members, entice new members to join their ranks, and to compete with other

---

<sup>20</sup> The Northern and Southern branches of the Moravian Church in the United States were officially considered “districts” of the American Province and shared representation at Unity Synods although they functioned and referred to themselves as separate “provinces” as early as the 1850s. Crews, 316n.

churches offering revivals. Initially the provincial leadership attempted to limit and control the use and form of revivals among the rural congregations. However, over time revivals spread from rural Moravian congregations to Salem and its associated chapels, including St. Philips, the only African-American Moravian church in the Southern United States.

The gradual incorporation of revivalism into the religious practices of rural, urban, black and white Southern Moravian congregations made the Southern Province more low church and egalitarian than their Northern brothers. At the same time, revivals helped move Southern Moravianism closer to the religious traditions of other contemporary mainline Southern Protestants.

The third chapter examines the impact of the Sunday school movement within the Southern Moravian Church. In the late nineteenth century, Moravians in North Carolina embraced a Southern Protestant formula for the growth of Sunday schools, featuring centralization with direct denominational oversight of the curriculum and program. With denominational Sunday schools, Moravians increased their numbers and trained a new generation in the customs and religious practices of the Southern church. The impact of Sunday school work on the expansion of the Southern Province was far more direct and widespread than the relatively slow and indirect growth resulting from revivals. Southern Moravians used denominational Sunday schools to oversee expansion efforts and control the message their children heard in the classroom. Sunday school work became a source of regional pride for the Southern Province and reinforced philosophical differences about Christian education between the Northern and Southern branches of the Moravian Church.

The final chapter of this thesis examines the Southern Province as a “mature” Southern denomination. As Southern Moravians drifted further from Moravians north of the Mason-Dixon



Line, they adopted more of the characteristics of their Protestant neighbors in the late nineteenth century Piedmont. Like Southern Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians before them—and sometimes for similar reasons—North Carolina Moravians engaged in their own publishing projects, assumed leadership roles in regional lay activities such as Christian Endeavor, and abandoned the worship architecture of their forebears. All of these were practical and real announcements to those within and outside of their denomination that Southern Moravians were Southern first. The final chapter serves as a case study about the “Southernness” of North Carolina Moravianism and the extent to which the differences between the two provinces had become permanent by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Moravian efforts to rebuild congregations and increase membership after the Civil War raised their profile among Southern evangelicals. However, in the Southern United States today, the Moravian Church is scarcely known outside of the North Carolina Piedmont. Popular perception of the denomination is colored by two sources. The first is Old Salem Museum and Gardens, a living history museum in Winston-Salem unaffiliated with the denomination that portrays the Moravians as a Germanic sect living in a frontier congregation town. The vast majority of Old Salem’s buildings date from the colonial, federal, and antebellum periods and the result is that the casual visitor to Old Salem often concludes that Moravians have either died out or maintain an Amish-like position on the fringes of American religion and society.<sup>21</sup>

The second source is ironically the Southern Moravians themselves. Members of the Southern Moravian Church regularly engage in amateur living history presentations. Parishioners wear period clothing to serve love feasts, the most well-known service among those not affiliated with the denomination. They also advertise “Candle Teas”—congregational bazaars at which members sell “authentic” Moravian items and demonstrate colonial craftsmanship. Many in the

church hold up the colonial era as the “golden age” of the denomination and chafe at its present obscurity. In recent years, denominational theologians and church historians, understanding a disconnect exists between the antebellum and modern Southern Moravian Church, have called for scholarship bridging the divide. This study is the first attempt to do so.

---

<sup>21</sup> Old Salem Museum and Gardens, “Who We Are,” <http://oldsalem.org/index.php?id=48>.

## CHAPTER ONE

### “TO CARE FOR OURSELVES”: A MORAVIAN SCHISM

It became evident that the respective Provincial situations were very different. It appeared that the needs of the two Districts were either not the same, or, at least, they were not, on both sides, understood in the same way. We awoke to the fact that no one would care for us as we were able to care for ourselves.

– *The Attitude of the Southern District toward Union*, 1884

Between 1880 and 1883, the Northern and Southern branches of the Moravian Church in America suffered a schism. A failed merger attempt between the provinces created sectional discord in the church. Although the union failed for political reasons, Southern Moravians interpreted the result as proof that Moravians in the North and South were ideologically different. This decision to go it alone allowed the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in North America to develop its own regional identity complete with its own myths, rituals, and heroes.

Denominational schisms between Northern and Southern branches of mainline American Protestant denominations were the rule rather than the exception throughout the nineteenth century. The antebellum debate over slavery caused the disintegration of several ecclesiastical bodies along sectional lines. Historian Mitchell Snay argues that Southern Protestantism bolstered separatism in the antebellum South because religious discourse and institutions “strengthened the sectionalization of Southern culture and politics,” and helped create a “sense of separate sectional identity” among white Protestants.<sup>22</sup> Denominational schisms, beginning with the Methodists in 1844, Baptists in 1845, and with the Presbyterians in 1857, reinforced the idea that North and

---

<sup>22</sup> Snay, 211.

South were culturally incompatible and provided an ominous prelude to the political divisions that led to the American Civil War.<sup>23</sup>

Southern Protestantism assured its followers that secession was divinely sanctioned. Even after their defeat, the Southern denominations that resulted from the antebellum schisms continued to believe their religious institutions were superior to the Northern versions and avoided reunion with their Yankee brethren at all costs. Daniel Stowell argues that nowhere was southern identity more pronounced than in the issue of postbellum religious reunion. Reconstruction reinforced the link between Southern nationalism and religion as white evangelicals took great pains to rebuild their religious institutions on an “explicitly southern basis.”<sup>24</sup>

Moravians were a unique American Protestant denomination, made up of members who identified with the Southern cause but whose religion did not reinforce it or contribute to Southern nationalism. Moravians in the North and South were part of a worldwide fraternity and united under a common religious banner. This delayed the appearance in Southern Moravianism of the co-dependent link between Southern nationalism and religious belief that developed in the major evangelic American denominations. Thus, the timing and nature of the Moravian Church’s North-South schism was unlike that of its Protestant neighbors.<sup>25</sup>

For most of the antebellum period the Unity Elder’s Conference (UEC) located in Herrnhut, Germany controlled the financial and religious decision-making for the American

---

<sup>23</sup> C.C. Goen, *Broken Churches, Broken Nation: Denominational Schisms and the Coming of the Civil War* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), 66-67.

<sup>24</sup> Daniel W. Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 100.

<sup>25</sup> Re-union or the unification of denominations split over the issue of slavery is different from merger, or the union of historically autonomous religious entities. This should not be viewed as a weakness, however, because both served to reinforce sectional identity and ideological schism between Northern and Southern religious contingents.

Provinces. Herrnhut ceded denominational control to the American church through a series of synods in the 1840s and 1850s. Beginning in 1848, the European leadership allowed the American districts to hold advisory Synods in Bethlehem and Salem to aid the UEC in addressing regional concerns. Anticipating provincial autonomy, the Southern Province held its first Synod in 1849 and discussed a proposal from North Moravians to unite the districts under a single administrative board. Although there was considerable support for the union within the Southern Synod, the delegates ultimately decided that the distance between North Carolina and Pennsylvania was too great for satisfactory management. In 1857 the General Synod made provincial autonomy in the American Moravian Church a reality. It empowered synods in America, Britain, and Germany to pass legislation governing their local affairs as long as their actions did not conflict with the general constitution of the worldwide Moravian Unity.<sup>26</sup>

As noted, the centralized authority of the international church had a significant impact on the development of Moravianism in America. The most important consequence was that European control shielded Moravians from the divisive debates about slavery that dominated the antebellum Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian bodies. Herrnhut never officially sanctioned slavery but looked the other way while North Carolina Moravians bought and sold slaves. Northern Moravians generally sided with abolitionists, although they did not openly criticize their Southern brethren about this “peculiar institution.”<sup>27</sup> Because of their small size and European roots Moravians in the North and South thought of themselves as part of a common, world-wide religious community. While most trans-American Protestant denominations were dividing over the issues leading to the Civil War, Moravians from each province openly

---

<sup>26</sup> Crews, 316.

fraternized. They sent delegates to each others' synods, transferred ministers, and engaged in cooperative mission work. However, with the advent of war, Moravian men marched off to fight for the Union and Confederacy, as their allegiances and consciences guided them, including the son of Salem's pastor, George Frederic Bahnson, who donned Confederate gray.<sup>28</sup>

Members of other faiths recognized a common religious bond between the Northern and Southern branches of the Moravian church as well. During the Civil War this association allowed the Southern Moravian communities to avoid pillaging at the hands of Northern troops. In 1865, General Stoneman's Union cavalry campaigned through the mountains of North Carolina disrupting Confederate supply lines and raiding towns. In April they reached Forsyth County. When the army entered Salem, the Moravian minister was relieved to note that "violations of gentlemanly conduct were few indeed...." Conversations with the Union officers revealed that several had attended the Moravian school in Lititz, Pennsylvania and speaking "feelingly of that happy time," restrained their men from ransacking the community.<sup>29</sup>

The strong fraternal bond between Moravians in the North and South survived the Civil War, but was tested, and eventually destroyed by the merger crisis. The first overture for union came from the Southern Province in 1869. When word of the resolution reached the Northern Synod, they responded in kind but by 1870 the idea lost momentum. In 1871, the Southern Committee on Church Organization reported to the Southern Synod that while a majority in the district favored union with the North, "it was not a good time" under the present conditions. The

---

<sup>27</sup> Rohrer, *Hope's Promise*, 169; The English branch of the Unity was the only Province that criticized the Southern Moravians for owning slaves. See Jon F. Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763-1840* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 300-301.

<sup>28</sup> Rohrer, *Hope's Promise*, 203; See also Sarah Bahnson Chapman, ed., *Bright and Gloomy Days: The Civil War Correspondence of Captain Charles Frederic Bahnson, A Moravian Confederate* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), xi-xiii.

<sup>29</sup> Salem Diary April 10-11, 1865, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

committee believed it needed several more years to rebuild its churches before it would be on sufficient financial and spiritual footing to entertain merger. Given the poor condition of many Southern Moravian churches in the immediate aftermath of the war, it seems reasonable that the situation had not improved to the point where union was a positive move for the district. Thus, the 1871 Synod indefinitely postponed the action.<sup>30</sup>

The death of Southern PEC president Emil A. de Schweinitz in 1879 was the catalyst that restarted merger negotiations between the American districts. The Southern Synod met in January 1880 and elected Edward Rondthaler, pastor of Salem Congregation, to fill the vacancy caused by de Schweinitz's death.<sup>31</sup> At the time of his election to the PEC Rondthaler had served only two and half years in the Southern Province. The son of a Moravian minister, Rondthaler grew up in Schoeneck, Pennsylvania and studied at Moravian College and Seminary in the 1860s. After graduation he served Moravian churches in Philadelphia and New York distinguishing himself as an outstanding theologian and an advocate of Christian education. Salem Congregation called Rondthaler to be its pastor in 1877, a post he held until his death in 1931.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to electing Rondthaler, the 1880 Synod heard a report from the provincial Committee on Finance. In order to help support the ailing country congregations, the committee

---

<sup>30</sup> *The Attitude of the Southern District toward Union*, June 1884, B 71:6 "Northern Province: Union with, commission minutes, 1880-1883," Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Crews, 369-370.

<sup>31</sup> "Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929," 1, Provincial Synod Minutes Box 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>32</sup> Stanley R. Woltjen, "One Hundredth Anniversary History of the West Side Moravian Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania," West Side Sunday School Box, Moravian Archives, Northern Province; "Report of the Com. of Ways and Means, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1860" Young Men's Missionary Society of Bethlehem 1860-1866, Folder "Y.M.M.S.," Moravian Archives, Northern Province; Crews, 404-405.



Figure 1. Rt. Rev. Edward Rondthaler (1842-1931)

Rondthaler served as the pastor of Salem Congregation from 1877 until 1931. He was elected to the Southern PEC in 1880 and served as its president from 1890 to 1923. Under his leadership the Southern Province enjoyed unprecedented growth.

Image courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province



recommended that the Synod reduce the salaries of the provincial secretary and treasurer.<sup>33</sup> The suggestion alarmed many in attendance. A Salem delegate stood and offered that rather than reducing salaries, a “much better way out of our financial difficulties would be to adopt measures looking toward a union with the Northern Province of our Church...”<sup>34</sup> The suggestion received resounding support from the Synod delegates, including Rondthaler who stood and gave an impromptu speech about the advantages of merging with the Northern Province. His argument for merger centered around two major issues. First, a union would allow the Southern Province to “call” Northern ministers to serve in Southern churches. The Southern Province struggled to find qualified ministers for its churches during most of the nineteenth century. By 1880, only five ordained clergy remained to serve the 13 Southern congregations.<sup>35</sup> Second, a merger would give the Southern congregations a stronger voice in directing church policy in North America. On Rondthaler’s recommendation, the Synod delegates unanimously passed a motion declaring their desire to unite with the Northern Province. The delegates drafted a letter of intent for the Northern PEC and elected a commission of three clergy and two laymen to oversee the process.<sup>36</sup>

In a letter responding to the Southern Commission in March 1880, the Northern PEC expressed its interest in uniting with the Southern Province, but with a reminder that the final decision rested with the Northern Synod. Merger necessitated amendments in the provincial constitution, which could only be changed by Synod. Since the next Northern Province Synod

---

<sup>33</sup> “Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929,” 11, Provincial Synod Minutes Box 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Daily Texts, 1881* (Bethlehem, PA: Office of Moravian Publications, 1881), 189-190.

<sup>36</sup> “Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929,” 12, Provincial Synod Minutes Box 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Minutes of the Commission on Union of Southern and Northern Provinces of Moravian Churches in America, January 21, 1880; B 71:6, “Northern Province: Union with, commission minutes, 1880-1883,” Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

was scheduled to meet in 1883, the Southern Union Commission resolved to table the issue until the spring of 1882.<sup>37</sup> In March 1881, however, the Southern PEC learned that the Northern Province intended to call a special synod in May to address its own financial difficulties. With an opportunity to present their merger plan to the Northern Synod ahead of schedule, the commission met in March to outline its proposal.<sup>38</sup>

According to the Southern commission's "Plan of Union," the Southern Province would be reconstituted as the "Wachovia District" of the united American Province of the Moravian Church. Southern congregations would enjoy all rights and privileges of the churches in the Northern District.<sup>39</sup> Southern country congregations could initially receive financial aid but the plan urged poor churches to achieve self-sufficiency "at the earliest possible moment" to avoid losing representation at the united Synod. Finally, the Wachovia land transferred to the Southern Province in 1877 would be placed in the hands of a new committee called the "Wachovia Financial Board." The board would consist of the PEC and three laymen elected by the United Synod to avoid any disputes over its use.<sup>40</sup>

In April 1881, the Southern commission communicated its intentions to the Northern PEC who responded positively.<sup>41</sup> The following month, members of the Southern Commission traveled to Bethlehem and made their case for merger to the Northern Synod. Rondthaler relayed the results of their efforts to the Southern PEC in July 1881. The Northern Province, he

---

<sup>37</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, March 1, 1880, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>38</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Edward Rondthaler, March 10, 1881, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>39</sup> "Plan of Union" March 17, 1881, B 71:6 Northern Province: Union with, commission minutes, 1880-1883; Southern Union Commission Minutes, March 16, 1881, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>40</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, March 16, 1881, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>41</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Southern Union Commission, April 14, 1881, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

reported, unanimously approved the Southern proposal. The Northern Synod appointed its own union commission to negotiate with the Southern Commission about synodical representation and financial obligations. Once the two finalized the details of merger, the Synod of 1883 would be the first held by the united American Province.<sup>42</sup>

Before it began negotiating with the Northern Commission, the Southern Commission decided to investigate the legal ramifications of the union. Its primary concern was the merger's impact on the Southern Province's state charter. In October 1881 the Southern Commission raised the issue with the Southern PEC which suggested the commission consult a lawyer for clarification. In February 1882, legal counsel confirmed that transferring the Wachovia land to the united American Province required changes to the province's legislative charter because the Southern Province held the deed to the real estate as an independent North Carolina corporation and a united American province would include oversight from an organization chartered in Pennsylvania. The proposition threatened to be both time consuming and expensive. The commission resolved to suspend its work until the next meeting of the North Carolina legislature in January 1883. The delay had important consequences.<sup>43</sup>

In June 1882, Rondthaler, frustrated by the slow pace of the merger, announced his resignation from the PEC. At a special Synod called to name his replacement, Rondthaler explained that he originally filled the vacancy on the PEC in 1880 because he thought the position would be a temporary one. But more than two years had passed with little progress toward union and he wanted to devote more time to his Salem pastorate. Synod delegates shared

---

<sup>42</sup> PEC Minutes July 18, 1881, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Crews, 409.

<sup>43</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, October 1, 1881, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; PEC Minutes February 2, 1882, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

Rondthaler's frustration, but before they could fill Rondthaler's vacancy, they heard a new plan from the union commission that promised the practical union of the two provinces "in a direct, simple manner."<sup>44</sup> The commission proposed that the Southern PEC resign and Synod elect the Northern PEC as their own. This way the provinces could circumvent any legal hurdles associated with changing the charter. Synod accepted the recommendations of the commission and the Southern PEC and Financial Board resigned their posts. The special synod closed with a mix of optimism and apprehension. While the Southern Province seemed closer than ever to consummating a union with their Northern Brethren, the prospect of surrendering their political independence left many Southern Moravians uneasy. The synodical minutes reflected both sentiments.<sup>45</sup>

In accepting the resignation of the members of the PEC, Synod felt that a solemn moment had arrived. The separate organization of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church was about to cease. That governing Board, instituted in the early days of the Province more than a hundred years ago, was to pass away and be no more. But in the waning of the old, we hail the dawning of the new, and believe that great blessings from our Father in Heaven are yet in store for the faithful workers in Wachovia.<sup>46</sup>

The Southern PEC sent word of its resignation to the Northern Province a week after the Synod.<sup>47</sup> The Northern reaction was not what the South expected. Rather than approve the plan, Edmund De Schweinitz, president of the Northern PEC penned a response that criticized the Southern Synod's actions. The Northern PEC, he wrote, was frustrated that the Southern Synod had not consulted it before this extraordinary and impulsive decision. The Northern PEC would

---

<sup>44</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, June 1, 1882, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid; PEC Minutes, May 12, 1882 - June 6, 1882, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>46</sup> "Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929," from Provincial Synod Minutes Box, 34, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>47</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, June 9, 1882, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

have preferred to have been consulted before the vote because it would have insisted upon a postponement allowing the Northern and Southern Union Commissions further time to arrange the details of the union.<sup>48</sup> The Northern PEC declined to serve as the Southern PEC, saying that the newly-resigned officials were in a better position to administer the Southern congregations until the merger was completed. Moreover, there were pressing needs in the Northern Province which took precedence over the Southern Province's desires. The Northern PEC asked that the Southern PEC continue in its duties until the North was able to address the Southern concerns. De Schweinitz pledged the Northern PEC would do what it could, "consistently [sic] with the other most important interests requiring our attention at present."<sup>49</sup> The Northern Union Commission, meanwhile, requested that the Southern Commission submit a second, more detailed draft of the union proposal which it would take up in a month's time.

The Southern Commission quickly drew up a second draft, titled "Details of Union" and submitted them to the Northern Commission. The "Details" reiterated the basic plan of union adopted by the districts in 1881, and added suggestions for synodical representation. The Southern Commission called for new regulations, to be voted on at the first United Synod, which would permit country congregations to have lay delegates at future meetings. Judging by their insistence on this clause, the Southern Commission understood the consequences of incorporating their poor country congregations into the United American Synod using the existing rules in the Northern constitution. Of the Southern Province's fifteen congregations, only Salem and Friedberg were self-sufficient. These were also the only congregations financially able to contribute to the denominational treasury at the rate required of Northern

---

<sup>48</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Southern Union Commission, June 16, 1882, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

congregations. Rather than sacrifice representation for the majority of their churches, the Southern Commission proposed changing the very rules for lay representation.<sup>50</sup>

In September 1882, Rondthaler made a trip to Bethlehem to visit his family. Knowing of his plans, the Southern Union Commission empowered him to meet with its Northern counterpart and negotiate on its behalf. Rondthaler was there to personally receive the Northern response to the Details of Union.<sup>51</sup> As if the initial response in June from the Northern PEC was not disappointing enough for the Southern Province, the September communication was even more vexing. Not surprisingly, the Northern Commission objected to the South's proposition for lay representation, correctly arguing it gave preferential treatment to its poor country congregations. Were it to follow the dictates of the Southern proposal then, argued the North, "the union from the very beginning will be an unequal one" and it would "lead to constant misunderstandings" between the districts.<sup>52</sup> The Commission insisted the Southern Province adopt the Northern constitutional regulations for synodical representation, believing it the more equitable solution.

The Northern Commission also raised concerns about the financial details of the Southern proposal in its September report. It explained that the union "must not in any way add to the financial burden of [the Northern Province], our people being strained to the very utmost."<sup>53</sup> The Northern Commission also expected, once the merger was complete, that the Southern congregations pay the same provincial tithes it received from Northern congregations. This

---

<sup>50</sup> "Details, under the General 'Plan of Union'" Southern Commission Minutes, June 9, 1882, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; The Union Commission of the Northern Province to the Union Commission of the Southern Province, September 20, 1882, B 71: 6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>51</sup> Crews, 412-413.

<sup>52</sup> The Union Commission of the Northern Province to the Union Commission of the Southern Province, September 20, 1882, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

included six “voluntary” annual collections, totaling 43 cents per communicant member, for a variety of causes, plus annual payments from the Southern Sustentation Fund to the Theological Seminary in Bethlehem. This was in addition to the two-dollar tax per communicant member levied by the Provincial Treasury to pay provincial salaries. The North was not without compassion for the poorest Southern churches. It understood that some might not be able to afford the payments at first and it would grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis.<sup>54</sup>

Upon his return to North Carolina, Rondthaler warned the Southern Commission that he believed some on the Northern Commission opposed equality for Southern Moravians in the United Province and would feel no remorse if the Northern stipulations caused the death of many Southern congregations. Rondthaler, now believing that compromise meant defeat, implored the Southern Commission to “stand our ground.”<sup>55</sup>

The Southern Commission met in late September 1882 to discuss the Northern concerns. Its members felt that so few communicants would be able to pay the two-dollar tax, not to mention the voluntary offerings, that the financial demands would cripple membership and bankrupt congregations.<sup>56</sup> In a strongly worded reply sent in October 1882, the Southern Commission laid out its reservations about the financial duties the North wished to impose: “We can make no positive pledges that any definite amounts will be contributed.” The commission continued:

---

<sup>54</sup> Crews, 413-414.

<sup>55</sup> Quote from Crews, 414.

<sup>56</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, September 27, 1882, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

It does seem to us that your proposals will work so as to lay burdens on the Southern Churches to which they are not accustomed and for which they will not see the need. Several of our country congregations are composed mainly of quite poor members and have church services but once or at most a very few times in a month. It would be doubtful policy—even decidedly hurtful—in such congregations to call for a collection at nearly every meeting and that for causes other than self-support [sic] which should be of prime importance.<sup>57</sup>

The Southern Commission took offense at the idea that their district represented a burden to the Northern treasury. They explained that it was never their intention to lay any additional onus on the Northern Treasury; rather it was their idea that in combining the financial resources of the provinces, “there might come to be a surplus of income” from which the United Synod could draw. Were some of the congregations indefinitely exempted from the annual contributions, they argued, it would serve the United Province better in the long run.<sup>58</sup>

Animosity between the districts increased when the Southern Commission received the North’s response to the South’s October 1882 communiqué. The issue of contributions dominated the letter. The Northern Province reiterated the unequal position of the merger if Southern churches were exempted from the annual voluntary offerings, pointing out that exemptions would create “a marked difference between them and the other churches” and prevent unity in the American Province if the common treasury were supported by “one [sic] part of its congregations but not [sic] by the other.”<sup>59</sup> The Northern Commission wondered at how the delegates of exempted congregations might feel when voting on church policy: “Will the Southern delegates take part in such discussions? Will they vote on such resolutions? Will their position not be both anomalous and embarrassing?” The Northern delegation offered the most

---

<sup>57</sup> “Reply to Northern Commission Paper of Sept. 2, 1882” Reprinted in Union Commission Minutes, December 12, 1882.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> “Reply to Southern Commission Paper of December 12, 1882” Union Commission Minutes, February 28, 1883.



stinging criticism when addressing the prospect of forfeiture of the two-dollar communicant tax for provincial salaries: “Would the Southern Churches, which would enjoy equally with the Northern all the benefits of the Provincial Government of the United Province really take no part in supporting that Government, that is in paying the salary and leave this entire burden to the Northern Churches?”<sup>60</sup>

As 1882 came to a close the leaders of the Southern Province were having serious doubts about the benefits of merger. Support from the laity was waning as well. Outwardly the Southern Commission assumed its share of blame for the delay. Privately, however, its members felt the Northern Province was largely responsible because of its unwillingness to compromise.<sup>61</sup> Regardless where fault lay, the postponements fouled negotiations and had a damaging effect on support for the merger in both districts. Some in the South believed that the union idea should be dropped altogether, but because the Southern Province originally suggested the idea to their Northern brethren, they felt bound to see the process through to the end.<sup>62</sup>

Rather than continue to negotiate by letter, and risk further damage to the relationship between the provinces, Edmund de Schweinitz suggested the two commissions meet face to face to address the complications directly.<sup>63</sup> The commissions scheduled a meeting for February 1883 in Salem so that they could assess the situation in the Southern Province first hand. At the meeting, the North continued to insist upon its requirements for union. It asked that the Southern Province call a special synod to explain the financial obligations to their congregations and get

---

<sup>60</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, February 28, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>61</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, December 12, 1882, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>62</sup> PEC, “The Recent Proposed Union Between the Northern and Southern Districts of the American Moravian Church,” Salem, June 2, 1884. B 41:13, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>63</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Southern PEC, February 8, 1883, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

formal approval. The Southern Province obliged, and in April 1883 delegates from the Southern churches met a third time in as many years to discuss items related to the merger.<sup>64</sup>

The results of the synod vote suggested that divergent opinions about the merger had formed among the Southern Churches. Whereas in 1881, the Southern congregations unanimously agreed to the idea of union, in 1883, after learning what the Northern Province expected of them, there was division between the country churches and Salem Congregation. The Southern Synod voted on three separate fiscal issues. The votes concerning voluntary offerings and seminary support passed unanimously. After a lengthy debate, the Synod agreed to the matter of donations to the provincial treasury designated for provincial salaries, but not unanimously. The majority of the nays came from representatives of Bethabara, Bethania, Friedberg, and Macedonia. That the vote was not unanimous and split along these lines had important consequences for the negotiations.<sup>65</sup>

In May 1883, the Southern Union Commission met to set the date for the union. The commission decided on January 1, 1884 to avoid paying the assessments for 1883.<sup>66</sup> When the Southern Commission communicated this, they included the tallies of the Synod votes rather than simply indicating that the motions had passed. The Northern Commission inferred that the Southern Commission meant to draw their attention to the dissent of the country congregations and interpreted the results as a vote of no confidence in the merger. Believing the dissent threatened the integrity of the union, the Northern Commission asked for a frank assessment of the situation: “Is it the opinion of the Southern Commission that in spite of the vote, as respected,

---

<sup>64</sup> Ibid; Southern Union Commission Minutes, February 28, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>65</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, April 5, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>66</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, May 3, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

of the Southern Synod, the two commissions should go on consummating the Union?”<sup>67</sup> To the Moravians in the North, it seemed the debate over the provincial tithes was not a North versus South issue but a Salem versus country congregations one. The north also rejected pushing the union back to January 1884, asking instead for a date no later than October 1, 1883. The Northern Province said it would appreciate financial contributions before the united Synod in 1884; otherwise the Southern contingent would not be on equal footing with the Northern, which had already contributed to the United Province.<sup>68</sup>

The Southern Province once again took offense at the North’s insinuation that that it was not universally committed to its fiscal responsibilities. The synod vote, it explained in a June 1883 letter, was not a reflection of the country congregations’ ideological stance on the levies, but simply a concern as to whether they could pay them. Nevertheless, the Southern Commission felt bound to honor its promise and replied that it intended to continue the unification process.<sup>69</sup>

Negotiations stalled during the summer of 1883 when neither side could find common ground on the issue of provincial donations or date of consummation. In a series of heated communications the North accused the South of being so uncooperative that everything the two commissions had worked for since the start of negotiations was “practically defeated.”<sup>70</sup> An air of exasperation suffused the North’s final communication in June 1883. “It seems to us,” exclaimed the Northern Commission, “that even now you do not accept what we have, again and again by word of mouth and in writing, tried to show you namely, that, since [our] last

---

<sup>67</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, May 31, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, June 21, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

Synod...our churches have voluntarily assumed certain burdens.”<sup>71</sup> It continued that if the Southern Churches desired to unite with the Northern Churches and enjoy the same rights and privileges, “they must as a matter of course, accept the same status and assume their share of said burdens.”<sup>72</sup> The Northern Commission closed with the warning that if the Southern Commission did not accept its position, then it ought to be notified so that it could circulate a publication informing the Northern district of the failure of the union.

In July 1883, the Southern Commission, tired by the long delays and desirous for an end to the negotiations, agreed to the North’s stipulations. It sent word to the Northern Commission that the Southern district would abide by the October 1, 1883 date for merger. Each Southern congregation would make the necessary payments to the provincial treasury “to the full extent of its ability” to receive representation at the coming 1884 synod.<sup>73</sup> Upon receipt of the Southern communication, the Northern Commission prepared the final “Articles of Union” and forwarded them to the Southern Commission for approval.

The Southern Commission met to approve the “Articles of Union” on September 8, 1883. During the discussion it became apparent that the commission members were split over whether to sign the document. Two of the members present, including Rondthaler, declared their unwillingness to sign the union agreement in its “present form” and offered to resign their seats on the commission so others could sign in their place.<sup>74</sup> The commission recessed and after several more days of deliberation, the Southern Commission decided that it could not approve

---

<sup>71</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, June 21, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> “To the Northern Union Commission, 5 July 1883” reprinted in Southern Union Commission Minutes, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>74</sup> Southern Union Commission Minutes, September 8, 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

the union in good conscience. Rondthaler explained the Southern position in a letter to the Northern Province on September 13. “After a more mature consideration of the whole subject,” he wrote, “several members of the Commission...regard Union at least under existing circumstances as unwise.”<sup>75</sup>

When the Northern Province learned of the South’s decision, they were surprised and disheartened. In a stern reply, the North reminded the Southern Commission that it was the Southern Province which initiated the union proceedings. The North inferred, correctly, that once the Southern churches realized that union would be more expensive than their current situation, they were no longer interested in merger. The Northern Commission passed a resolution to end negotiation with the Southern Commission and printed the announcement in the *Moravian*.<sup>76</sup>

Three years of increasingly acrimonious exchanges between the districts soured relations and divided Moravians along North-South lines. In the immediate aftermath, the Southern PEC warned the Northern PEC that the merger episode threatened to “cloud our future dealings” and accused the Northern Union Commission of stealing their confidential synod minutes when the portions describing the failed merger appeared in print.<sup>77</sup> The Northern PEC, meanwhile, admonished their Southern brethren as capricious. Each side declined to send representatives to the others’ synod, concluding over forty years of fraternal exchanges.<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> Southern Union Commission to Northern Union Commission, September 13, 1883, B 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>76</sup> “To the Southern Commission” reprinted in undated Southern Union Commission Minutes, September 1883, B 71:6, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>77</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Southern P.E.C., February 6, 1884, Box 71:5 Northern Province, P.E.C., 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; “The Recent Proposed Union Between the Northern and Southern Districts of the American Moravian Church,” Salem, June 2, 1884. Folder B 41:13, Moravian Archives, Southern Province. Published later by the province as *The Attitude of the Southern District toward Union*.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*; Crews, 419, 423.

Southern Moravians expressed their religious independence in a material way when Salem congregation began preparations to build its own seminary in February of 1884. A single Moravian seminary located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania proved another stumbling block during the negotiations. The North wanted increased financial support from the Southern churches for the seminary which the South was unwilling to provide. Southern Moravians complained it would be a poor investment in an ostensibly “Northern establishment.”<sup>79</sup> The Southern PEC raised the issue in its official response to the merger crisis: “We have sent candidates from the South to the Seminary, who have only, in occasional instances, returned to us again. We have received ministers, whom we have esteemed as excellent brethren, but who have shown again and again that they did not like the South as a place of residence and were not in sympathy with our people.” The Southern leadership believed that a seminary in Salem would solve these problems by training ministers suited to the particular conditions of the South.<sup>80</sup>

In the end, the motivations for merger on each side were incongruent and incompatible. The Northern Province entered into merger negotiations to make the North American Moravian Church more efficient. When the merger failed, the North blamed the South for being unwilling to accept the obligations necessary for the combined churches to succeed. For the Southern Province, merger represented its very existence and therefore Southern Moravians interpreted the North’s refusal to compromise as an indication they did not care if Wachovia survived.<sup>81</sup> Before

---

<sup>79</sup> Edmund de Schweinitz to Southern PEC, June 7, 1884, B 71:5 Northern Province PEC, 1878-1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>80</sup> “The Recent Proposed Union Between the Northern and Southern Districts of the American Moravian Church,” Salem, June 2, 1884, B 41:13, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Although a Southern Moravian seminary never came to fruition, the subject was revisited more than once in the 1890s as the Southern Province struggled to entice ministerial candidates in school at Bethlehem to work in their district. In 1892 Southern churches raised \$7,500 for the project. See PEC Minutes September 1, 1892, November 2, 1892, and February 6, 1896, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>81</sup> “The Recent Proposed Union Between the Northern and Southern Districts of the American Moravian Church,” Salem, June 2, 1884, B 41:13, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

1884 the Northern and Southern Provinces felt a strong fraternal bond and perceived their separation as only geographic. After 1884 the separation became real.

## CHAPTER TWO

### “REVIVALS AND KINDRED SUBJECTS”: A CHALLENGE TO LITURGICAL WORSHIP

By the time the next issue...is in print a number of our ministers will have begun their annual series of special services. These meetings, which are often styled “protracted” meetings, generally last from a week to ten days. The experience of many years has shown that great spiritual refreshing follows this especial form of service, which is so well adapted to the circumstances of country congregations. These days are spent on ‘mountain heights,’ and from them are gained new spiritual impulses and a fresh awakening of zeal. Let the prayers of our people be very earnest in behalf of this Fall’s work.

– *The Wachovia Moravian*, July 1894

Revivals were a defining form of religious expression in the Southern church experience in the nineteenth century. Moravians were one of the few mainline Protestant denominations in the American South that avoided revivalism. While they shared the idea of spiritual rebirth with other Southern Protestant denominations, their pietistic and liturgical background meant that the church hierarchy frowned upon public displays of spirituality. During Reconstruction, the Moravian leadership in North Carolina modified its position on revivalism to avoid falling into complete irrelevance with adult Southerners—a decision that set them on a divergent religious path from their liturgically-grounded Northern Brethren.

Historian John Boles observes that revivalism “appealed to the heart, not the head.” It incorporated frightening theology emphasizing damnation and hellfire to convince the un-churched to convert to Christianity and existing Christians to revitalize their faith.<sup>82</sup> Revivals became popular in North Carolina and other Southern states after the so-called Second Great Awakening.<sup>83</sup> This period of intense religiosity gained momentum in the Southern United States after a series of large camp meetings at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801. The movement swept

---

<sup>82</sup> John B. Boles, *The Great Revival 1787-1805: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1972), xiii.



east and reached North Carolina in 1803. As Boles notes, “In almost every section of the state, there were meetings marked by extraordinarily large crowds...hundreds falling, shouting, convulsing, [and] finding security in apparent salvation.”<sup>84</sup>

Revivals came in many varieties. The most popular were camp meetings and protracted meetings. At camp meetings, as the name implies, participants gathered from miles around and camped out for several days to listen to preaching, to pray, and to sing. Camp meetings were useful for evangelizing large crowds in rural areas that lacked large, permanent places of worship. Ministers in cities and towns, however, preferred indoor revivals known as “protracted meetings.” Protracted meetings attracted smaller crowds than camp meetings, averaging 20 to 50 per service as opposed to hundreds or thousands. Services were held in a church or hall on successive nights. Most protracted meetings lasted a week to ten days, but many continued for a month or more. At camp meetings and protracted meetings, ministers exhorted those in attendance to accept Christ as their savior and warned backsliders about the risk of eternal damnation. For some, the spiritually charged atmosphere elicited violent, emotional reactions as people fell to the ground and rolled around in convulsions; others barked, “jerked,” and danced.<sup>85</sup>

The Pentecostal behavior associated with camp meetings and protracted meetings worried the Moravians in Salem and elsewhere. In 1802 the town diarist complained that revivals produced behavior that was “very offensive and running contrary to the teachings of the Gospel, for example, people fell down and lay for a long time in a kind of swoon, experiencing the pangs

---

<sup>83</sup> On the Second Great Awakening see Donald G. Mathews, “The Second Great Awakening as An Organizing Process, 1780-1830: An Hypothesis,” *American Quarterly* 21 (Spring 1969): 23-43.

<sup>84</sup> Boles, 76.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 67; Donald Scott, “Evangelicalism, Revivalism, and the Second Great Awakening,” National Humanities Center, <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/nevanrev.htm>.

of the new birth.”<sup>86</sup> The leaders of the denomination shared this sentiment and discouraged revival preachers from proselytizing among their settlements and farm congregations. Despite this official disapproval, revivals remained a powerful draw among Moravians worshiping in the former *Landegemeinen* and Bethania.

The prevailing opinion among scholars of religious history is that the Moravians in the antebellum South shielded themselves from revivalism because they erected social boundaries between themselves and those living in the North Carolina Piedmont around them.<sup>87</sup> In other words, camp and protracted meetings failed to breach the physical or social boundaries of the Moravian settlements. The Moravian Church in the American South and its ordained leadership, in fact, avoided revivalist religion because it was contrary to their liturgical worship preferences. After the Civil War church leaders and clergy began using revivals to secure the loyalty of their rural parishioners and grow membership in the former *Landegemeinen* and Bethania, which had suffered the most from the war. In the 1880s, revivals spread to urban white Moravian congregations as sharecroppers moved from the fields to the city to work in the mills of Winston and Salem. At the same time, Salem’s African American Moravian congregation, St. Philips, began holding protracted meetings to attract displaced blacks to their faith. The impetus for change came from above and below, as the denominational leadership and church laity struggled to find common ground on the appropriateness of revivalism in the church.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> Rohrer, *Hope’s Promise*, 189.

<sup>87</sup> Boles, 134-135; Mathews, 134-135; See also Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited*, 158; Quakers, Lutherans, and German Reformed churches, for example, avoided revivalism during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See Mathews, 134-135 and Hill, 158.

<sup>88</sup> Numerous historians have written about revivalism and its use as an evangelizing agent to win denominational converts. See John Boles, *The Great Revival*; Philip N. Mulder, *A Controversial Spirit*.

Even though the church regulated contact between its members and people outside the congregation towns, Moravians did not live in a vacuum. In fact, they were keenly aware of the world around them and made deliberate efforts to integrate themselves into the legal, political, and economic systems of the Southern backcountry.<sup>89</sup> In his analysis of the Southern Moravian Church from 1780-1860, S. Scott Rohrer argues that the Moravian leadership equated the emotionalism of revivals with “disorder” and feared their influence in their congregations because of an ethnic predisposition for order. Implicit in this interpretation is the idea that once the Moravians in Wachovia shed their German-ness, they would no longer be opposed to the camp meeting movement. Yet, there is a wealth of evidence that by the Civil War the Southern Moravian Church was no longer an ethnic German sect. In 1855 the Elders of the Salem Congregation moved to have sermons preached in English every Sunday and German on every third Sunday in the afternoon.<sup>90</sup> In 1858 the official records of the church changed to English, including congregational diaries and memorabilia. Even before English became the official language of church matters, Moravians used English in common community discourse and transactions.<sup>91</sup>

By 1860, the Moravians were more ethnically akin to their American countrymen than they were to their Moravian brethren in Europe; however, Moravian religious practices in North Carolina continued to differentiate them from their Piedmont neighbors. Revivalism remained a topic of debate between Moravians in rural and town congregations following the Civil War. The

---

<sup>89</sup> Thorp, 4.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 255; See also Adelaide L. Fries ed., *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton Co., 1922-1969), 5612 – henceforth referenced as “MR” (Moravian Records).

<sup>91</sup> Jerry Lee Surrat, “From Theocracy to Voluntary Church and Secularized Community: A Study of the Moravians in Salem, North Carolina, 1772-1860,” (PhD diss., Emory University, 1968), 252-253; See also MR, 810, 837, 1140, 1112, 1190.

PEC and those who worshiped in Salem felt uncomfortable with the emotional excesses of revivalism because it corroded liturgical discipline. The issue among the leaders, clergy, and Salem's laypeople was the challenge revivalism posed to the denomination's longstanding worship tradition, which was formal and ordered. Moravian services included ministerial readings and congregational responses supplemented with portions of the Catholic Litany. Congregants affirmed their connection to the ancient church by reciting the Nicene and Apostles Creeds.<sup>92</sup> The renewed *Unitas Fratrum*, like the Church of England, was a high church, claiming a direct line of apostolic succession, stressing the importance an educated clergy, and orders of ministry.<sup>93</sup> Revivals offended the Moravian high-church mentality. Anti-revivalist sentiment among Moravian provincial leaders echoed that of other high-church denominations in nineteenth century America. In the evangelical South, the Episcopal Church led the charge against revivalism.<sup>94</sup> Like the Moravian clergy, Episcopal priests warned against engaging in "religious excitements" with "excessive zeal" and railed against those who preached "without form and without order."<sup>95</sup>

It is important to note that Moravian leaders did not object to revivalism for evangelical reasons. The overall goal of the camp meeting movement—winning converts to Christ—was compatible with the Brethren's tradition of mission work. Instead, they objected to the excessive emotionalism of revivals. Moravians believed the acceptance of Christ during an emotional

---

<sup>92</sup> Shantz, 9-11.

<sup>93</sup> Hamilton, 62-63.

<sup>94</sup> Richard Rankin, *Ambivalent Churchmen and Evangelical Churchwomen: The Religion of the Episcopal Elite in North Carolina, 1880-1860* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 79.

<sup>95</sup> Quotes from Calvin Colton, *Thoughts on the Religious State of the Country: With Reasons for Preferring Episcopacy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1836) in *Antirevivalism in Antebellum America: A Collection of Religious Voices*, James D. Bratt, ed., (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 107-108; The most outspoken Moravian critic of revivalism was John Chapman Cooke, pastor of Friedland Congregation in the 1850s. MR, 6257.

frenzy meant the conversion was superficial—a consequence of Moravianism’s roots in German pietism.<sup>96</sup> Zinzendorf himself described the mass religious meetings during the first Great Awakening as unruly and extravagant and Moravian leadership in the antebellum Southern Province shared his skepticism about the sincerity of the conversion experience within the camp meeting context. This stance set them apart from most Southern Protestants and was similar to that of Moravians living in Pennsylvania. Moravians practiced personal devotion and emphasized spiritual rebirth but they preferred to do so within a restrained atmosphere, avoiding provocative demonstrations in their worship rituals. The church discouraged shouting and groaning in worship, believing true religion was found in quiet communion with God.<sup>97</sup>

Rural Moravian congregations found revivals exciting because they provided a change from the conservative Moravian liturgy used in worship each week. Often to the irritation of the denominational leadership, members of Hope, Friedland, Friedberg, Macedonia, Mount Bethel, and Bethania participated in camp meetings in the late antebellum period. During the 1850s Methodists were the most aggressive revivalists in the Piedmont region, and by 1860 they were the largest denomination in Forsyth County, boasting 14 of the county’s 27 congregations.<sup>98</sup> Moravian pastors complained that attendance suffered at Sunday worship when circuit riders held revivals nearby.<sup>99</sup> In 1857 the pastor of Friedland remarked that families in his church “troop off together to camp meetings...and the natural consequence of all this is a dying out of

---

<sup>96</sup> MR, 6085; Rohrer, *Hope’s Promise*, 189.

<sup>97</sup> The belief among some pietists, including many Moravians at this time, was that one could be so overcome by a sense of God’s grace that rather than being compelled to shouting or screaming, he or she would be moved to silence. David Schattschneider email message to the author, September 19, 2008; Hamilton, 154-159.

<sup>98</sup> Shirley, 270.

<sup>99</sup> MR, 6257.

our interest in this section amongst the fragments of what was once [our] congregation.”<sup>100</sup> Still, Moravian pastors largely tolerated their members attending camp meetings as long as the participants refrained from emotional outbursts during their own congregational worship services.

In late 1865, the Southern Province held a weeklong Synod, its first since the start of the Civil War. As was customary, each congregation in Wachovia sent two delegates to Salem to discuss the matters at hand. The Synod opened with a debate about the appropriateness of “revivals and kindred subjects.”<sup>101</sup> The issue pitted the interests of the country congregations against those of Salem Congregation. Twice during the first day, factions opposed to revivalism attempted to table the discussion, but when put to a vote, each of the measures failed.<sup>102</sup> The debate continued into the second day of the Synod and rather than deliberate a third day, the delegates reached a compromise allowing camp meetings in certain situations: “Resolved, that on account of the peculiar situation of the country congregations in Wachovia, protracted meetings in themselves are not inappropriate but the Synod impresses upon the attention of ministers and people that such meetings should be had in accordance with the principles and usages of our United Brethren’s Church....” The Synod elaborated, “If shoutings and other similar demonstrations occur on such occasions, we do not by any means consider this to be an essential part of worship.”<sup>103</sup> Thus, Synod sanctioned the use of revivals provided they were limited to country congregations and reasonably subdued. For its final action, Synod appointed a

---

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> “Abstract of The Journal of the Provincial Synod of Wachovia Held at Salem, Dec 7<sup>th</sup> 1864 and of the Adjourned Session held from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Nov, 1865,” Salem, NC: L.V & E.T. Blum, Printers, 1865, 1, Located in the Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid; MR, 6085.

lay commission to assess the state of affairs in the rural churches and report to the PEC the following year.<sup>104</sup>

The Unity Elder's Conference in Germany issued a stern rebuke to the Southern Province when they learned of the resolution. The UEC reminded the Southern PEC that such behavior was "completely opposed" to the spirit of the Church; moreover, these standards applied to all congregations in Wachovia, even those made up of "uneducated farm folk." The UEC argued that strong leadership was necessary. Clergy were to express to their parishioners that shouting and quaking were forbidden. According to the UEC, Moravian missionaries encountered the same thing with their slaves in Jamaica during the Great Awakening. The slaves stopped after they learned that the Moravians disapproved of their behavior. "Experience has shown," wrote the U.E.C, "that quiet revivals have been more lasting than the loud kind which are accompanied by much shouting."<sup>105</sup>

In 1866, the lay commission appointed at the previous year's Synod met with the PEC and reported a dire state of affairs in most of the outlying Moravian congregations. Economic depression gripped the countryside. Church buildings and graveyards were in disrepair and provincially owned farmland was neglected and overgrown. The lay group was surprised to find the church at Hope sheltering livestock instead of worshipers. With money scarce, parishioners struggled to pay their pastors' salaries.<sup>106</sup> The commission was heartened, however, by the religiosity among those they met. Seeing fertile ground for future work, they recommended that the denomination support the poorest congregations until the economic situation improved. Finally, the commission noted that while the rural laypeople were pleased with Synod's decision

---

<sup>104</sup> 1865 Synod Abstract, 13.

<sup>105</sup> MR, 6085.

to allow revivals, many remained skeptical that the PEC would comply with the directive.<sup>107</sup> The reporters cautioned the elders to “deal gently” with their country congregations when things occurred in services that did not suit their “individual feelings and opinions.”<sup>108</sup>

The Synod of 1865 explicitly addressed revivalism but the consequences of their decisions were not what the leadership expected. The country congregations used the Synod resolution as license to increase their flirtation with emotive worship. Parishioners in churches including Friedberg, Macedonia, and Bethania held a record number of revivals the following summer.<sup>109</sup> Country congregations expected their ministers to preside over the revival services. At this tentative stage of denominational acceptance, the liturgically grounded Moravian clergy felt uncomfortable and ineffective with revivalism as an evangelistic tool. Moravian pastor R. Parmenio Leinbach led simultaneous camp and protracted meetings at the preaching stations of Muddy Creek, Friedberg, and Macedonia in the summer of 1866. The grueling schedule exhausted him. Leinbach was aware of how ill-suited he was to conduct the meetings. He complained that his evangelism at Muddy Creek had not yielded a single member in six years, but a local Baptist minister had held one service, his effort “swept out the neighborhood,” winning 36 converts for his denomination. Leinbach worried he may lose more, reporting that a Friedberg member was so affected by revival preaching that she considered defection to the Baptists.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> MR, 6615-18.

<sup>107</sup> MR, 6621.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> MR, 6656-6661.

<sup>110</sup> MR, 6661.



The PEC feared that revivalism would challenge high church hierarchy and sow the seeds of religious egalitarianism within their country congregations. Within a decade, this was seen at Friedberg. The congregation's pastor, David Smith, refused to preside at and allow revivals for the church, and his parishioners responded with a threat to withhold his salary. In May 1875 Smith recorded in the congregational diary that "after the services a committee meeting was held, in which the minister was shamefully abused for not being willing to fall in with them in keeping protracted meetings."<sup>111</sup> Pastor Smith eventually gave into the demands of his flock, but within two years was transferred to another congregation.<sup>112</sup>

Presiding over revivals in their own churches was difficult for many of the Moravian clergy, but using revivals to reach out to the unchurched in the countryside proved even more challenging. Moravian pastor E. P. Grieder wrote that he was close to a camp meeting at Crooked Run near Mt. Pleasant. He decided to attend, but when he got there he realized their preacher had not arrived. The crowd convinced him to fill in and he accepted, though he was unaccustomed to their particularly emotive brand of revivalism. "I had to preach twice for them," wrote an embarrassed Grieder in his diary, "and expose myself in a manner beyond my present ability."<sup>113</sup>

As revivalism became firmly entrenched in rural congregations, Moravian clergy grew to accept that they should play a role in interdenominational revivals or "union meetings." These services featured preachers from a variety of Protestant backgrounds. Concern for salvation superseded sectarian differences between ministers. Union meetings were common in rural areas without an established church. In 1874, five ministers from the Southern Province joined five

---

<sup>111</sup> MR, 7169.

<sup>112</sup> Crews, 862.

local Methodist ministers in leading a union revival in southwestern Forsyth County.<sup>114</sup> Even at union meetings preachers from other denominations tended to overshadow the Moravian ministers. Christian Rights led union meetings in eastern Forsyth County with local Baptist and Methodist churches throughout the 1870s. After a weeklong revival in 1875, Rights reported that his preaching had not been as effective as that of a Quaker who was proselytizing on behalf of a nearby Methodist church. The meeting yielded several converts, although none joined the Kernersville congregation where Rights was serving. “The Methodists seem to be very well pleased with the result of the meeting,” recorded Rights in his diary. “The Quaker shook the bush, and *they* [sic] caught the game.”<sup>115</sup>

The Civil War devastated the Southern Province’s outlying churches and the economic strain it produced meant that spiritual matters took a backseat to more pressing needs. During Reconstruction congregational growth assumed primary importance as the former *Landgemeinen* and Bethania attempted to rebuild. Revivals offered a two-pronged tool for spiritual outreach. Laity who deserted the Moravian Church for the Methodist and Baptist denominations returned, lured by the Synod’s promise of revivals. At the same time, revivals won new souls for the country congregations. Throughout the 1870s, Moravian ministers held seasonal camp and protracted meetings because they were an inexpensive way for cash-strapped rural congregations to proselytize. The situation at Friedland in the 1870s was typical. Between 1865 and 1875 membership declined from 99 to 62 members. Yet a four-day revival in the fall of

---

<sup>113</sup> MR, 7165-7166.

<sup>114</sup> This event took place a safe distance from the town of Salem, where such activity would still have been viewed with suspicion; MR, 7117-7118.

<sup>115</sup> MR, 7180.

1876 added 11 new adults—a 22 percent increase in the church rolls.<sup>116</sup> A similar revival at Macedonia netted 19 new communicants, a total increase of more than 25 percent.<sup>117</sup>

The Moravian camp meetings proved so popular among the rural residents of Forsyth County that the PEC took the unprecedented step of appointing a lay minister to meet the demand. In 1880 the church elders granted Samuel Woosley, a member of the Friedberg Congregation, a one-year renewable license to preach the Gospel.<sup>118</sup> Woosley was a talented revivalist. What he lacked in formal theological training, he made up for with enthusiasm and evangelistic conviction. In 1881, with the PEC's blessing, Woosley organized a series of meetings for the Macedonia Congregation. He expanded his work to a Davie County schoolhouse a year later, where Woosley's preaching was so well received that attendees petitioned the PEC to form a Moravian congregation.<sup>119</sup> After the creation of the Provincial Sunday School Committee in 1884, Woosley held revivals in conjunction with the opening of new Sunday schools in Wachovia to win over the parents of attending children. By 1890, he had emerged as the Province's chief evangelist. In the summer and fall of each year, Woosley oversaw dozens of services in and outside of Forsyth County. In 1894, the PEC began awarding him an annual stipend for his revival efforts.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> Friedland statistics from B 71:9 Provincial Statistics, 1820-1890 (incomplete), Moravian Archives, Southern Province; MR, 7229.

<sup>117</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 7, September 1893, 3-4.

<sup>118</sup> PEC Minutes, April 1, 1880, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>119</sup> PEC Minutes, February 2, 1882, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>120</sup> PEC Minutes, December 6, 1894, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books, 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

Woosley's career was unlike that of his contemporary Moravian pastors. Although he was reared in a Moravian congregation, he was exposed to revivals from an early age. The revival influence at Friedberg was strong in the 1860s and he most likely attended revivals there as a young adult. After eight years of provincial service, the PEC ordained Woosley, validating his service to the Province and work. It also represented a dramatic departure from the antebellum PEC's insistence on a formally educated clergy. The Moravian college and seminary in Bethlehem assured Northern Province congregations that their ministerial needs would be met by educated candidates, possessing four or more years of study at the university level. Woosley and those who followed him established an alternate route to ordination.<sup>121</sup>

At the same time, rural white Moravians were expanding the traditional boundaries of appropriate worship in the Forsyth County countryside, black Moravians were experimenting with revivalism in Salem. As early as 1867, members of St. Philips asked to hold prayer meetings in their church according to the "Methodist plan" to grow their congregation. The PEC agreed provided a white pastor presided. In other words, black Moravians could have revivals as long as white clergymen led them. Both sides were uncomfortable with the arrangement. White Moravian ministers complained about the rowdiness of the St. Philip's meetings. Black members, meanwhile, wanted more demonstrative services and chafed over the PEC's unwillingness to provide them.<sup>122</sup>

African American Moravians viewed revivals differently than their white brethren. Revivals were more than a reaction against liturgical Moravianism; they were a religious expression of their emancipation. In most Southern Protestant churches, freedmen sought to

---

<sup>121</sup> PEC Minutes, June 7, 1883, June 3, 1886, October 16, 1888, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Hamilton, 445-446; Crews, 427-428.

<sup>122</sup> MR, 6778, 6859.

establish a new and separate religious life for themselves after the Civil War. Most often this involved the creation of separate and parallel black denominations. The Moravian Church, however, continued as a bi-racial, albeit segregated, denomination. The white Moravian leadership insisted on keeping St. Philips under its control, alienating potential converts.<sup>123</sup>

By 1869, the work in St. Philips was languishing. The Salem minister spoke frankly about the situation in the church record. “Some are not satisfied with our quiet ways,” he explained. “They want more lively meetings in which they can ‘rejoice’ without restraint, and as they know I am opposed to noisy meetings...they seem disposed to go elsewhere.”<sup>124</sup> In an effort to salvage the situation, several St. Philips members petitioned the PEC to ordain an African American minister to “preach and keep meetings.”<sup>125</sup> The PEC declined, citing a lack of suitable candidates, but appointed a black elder, Alexander Gates, to hold protracted meetings for the congregation.<sup>126</sup>

The appointment had the desired effect. African American-led revivals helped increase St. Philips’ membership. Gates conducted services with enthusiasm—too much so in the opinion of some white Moravians. In the summer of 1872, a protracted meeting at St. Philips elicited complaints from nearby whites on account of “the noise and disturbance” in the evening.<sup>127</sup> The members of St. Philips took offense and suspended their revivals until the following season. In 1876, Gates and his supporters left St. Philips after a dispute with black elders over the direction

---

<sup>123</sup> Wanda Hendricks, “St. Philips Moravian Church of Salem, NC: Its Past and Future,” MA th. Wake Forest University, 1984, 54. Stowell, 70.

<sup>124</sup> MR, 6863.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, 6865.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 6865, 6903.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 6993.

of the church. Those members who stayed comprised, in the words of S. Scott Rohrer, a “loyal core of black Moravians” willing to submit to white governance in their religious lives. This included the introduction of more subdued protracted meetings after 1880.<sup>128</sup>

With the exception of St. Philips, revivalism remained a rural endeavor among Moravian congregations in Forsyth County until the 1880s. The arrival of the railroad in 1873 heralded the rapid growth of commercial agriculture in Winston and Salem in the New South and the introduction of revivalism in Salem’s white Moravian congregations coincided with an influx of unskilled labor into the “Twin Cities” as they industrialized.<sup>129</sup> The population of Forsyth County boomed in conjunction with the tobacco and textile industries. Between 1880 and 1890, the number of white residents in Winston and Salem quadrupled.<sup>130</sup> These were former farm hands, moving to the city by the thousands to work in mills. In addition to their political and social inclinations, the new residents brought with them a penchant for emotive evangelicalism. White Protestant churches in both communities sought to capitalize on the situation and held revivals to attract new members. In 1876 the Baptist church in Winston hosted a revival at which 20 “backsliders” repented and joined the ranks of the congregation. The results did not go unnoticed by the Moravians, as the story featured prominently in Salem’s *People’s Press*.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup> S. Scott Rohrer, “Freedman of the Lord: The Black Moravian Congregation of Salem, N.C., and its Struggle for Survival, 1856-1890,” Unpublished Manuscript, Sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of St. Philip’s Churches, 1992, 48, Manuscript located in the archival collection of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, NC; S. Scott Rohrer, “A Mission Among the People: The World of St. Philips Church From 1890 to 1952,” Unpublished Manuscript, sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of St. Philip’s Church, 1993, ii, Manuscript located in the archival collection of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, NC.

<sup>129</sup> *The People’s Press*, July 17, 1873, 3.

<sup>130</sup> Between 1870 and 1890, the population of Winston Township in Forsyth County grew from 1,603 to 11,399. White and black sharecroppers made up the majority of the new inhabitants. Statistics from the Federal Census of 1880 and 1890.

<sup>131</sup> *The People’s Press*, October 19, 1876, 3.

The most famous revival among Moravians in Salem was the “Great Elm Street Revival” of 1884. Elm Street Chapel was organized by Salem Congregation as a preaching station in 1862. It comprised mill hands working the Fries Mill complex in Salem’s “Factory Row.” Two wealthy Moravian families from Salem Congregation, the Fries and Spachs, owned the majority of the mills along this corridor. Fries’ operational output grew more than ten-fold between 1870 and 1890. Increased production demanded additional labor, and so the number of workers employed by Fries also grew. In 1870, the Fries Mill complex listed 27 operatives in its logs. By 1886, the number had reached 184.<sup>132</sup>

That mill hands wanted revivals was obvious from workers flocking to evangelical sects like the Free Will Baptists, Cumberland Presbyterians, and Wesleyan Methodists when preachers organized camp meetings on the edge of town. Initial efforts from Salem Congregation to attract laborers proved fruitless. Mill workers found the Moravian style of worship too formal and lacking in emotion compared to the fervor of the Methodist services they enjoyed in the countryside.<sup>133</sup> Unless Salem Congregation let go of its reservations about revivals, it risked losing the opportunity to add members from the thousands of potential converts moving into the community. The mill workers and Moravian leadership eventually found common ground in an emotionally subdued style of revival service that satisfied the spiritual needs of the workers and liturgical tradition of the church.

In fall 1886, John McCuiston, the junior pastor of Salem Congregation, held a protracted meeting at the Elm Street Chapel. During the service three persons stood and professed their salvation. Encouraged by this positive response and restrained atmosphere, McCuiston

---

<sup>132</sup> Shirley, 152-154.

<sup>133</sup> Jaqueline Dowd Hall et al, *Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 178-179; Shirley, 83; MR, 6791-6792.

announced he would conduct a series of meetings beginning the following Monday and continue nightly “as long as any interest was manifested.”<sup>134</sup> By early October McCuiston reported interest in the services had become “deeper and more widespread than ever” with numerous attendees inquiring after and seeking Jesus.<sup>135</sup> Edward Rondthaler praised the work of his understudy to the PEC: “Night after night, and week after week persons were found anxiously making the inquiry, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They were directed to the Saviour and... joyfully testified that they had found Him.”<sup>136</sup> The Great Elm Street Revival lasted 50 days with 60 members joining Salem congregation as a result. The new additions thrilled the PEC and in a noteworthy change of opinion, the provincial leadership hailed the revival as a manifestation of the Moravian pietism of old:

Perhaps the most interesting feature... is that in all our congregations we have been favored with revival influence, and a greater desire on the part of our people for that inward spiritual life which was the grand rallying cry of our fathers in the ‘days of old,’ and by which we were acknowledged by the outside world to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.<sup>137</sup>

When viewed within the larger context of the failed merger with the Northern Province, the PEC’s change of heart was understandable. Revivals provided a popular and inexpensive way to add members to the church rolls.

McCuiston’s work generated excitement throughout the Southern Province. So much, in fact, that the 1887 Synod endorsed revivalism as essential to the “spiritual health and vigor” of

---

<sup>134</sup> Quote from Christian D. Weber, “A Review of Church Extension in the Moravian Church, Southern Province 1753-1995,” *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*, vol. 29, (1996): 103-124.

<sup>135</sup> Diary of John F. McCuiston, September 25, 1886 - October 2, 1886, digital transcription available at the Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>136</sup> “Triennial Report of the Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, from January 1884 to November 1887,” 9-10, B 41:14, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid; PEC Minutes, December 2, 1886, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; Weber, 111.



Moravianism and recommended that pastors “introduce and keep protracted meetings in all of their respective congregations.”<sup>138</sup> The revival spirit gripped Salem’s “Home” Moravian Church in early 1896 when Rondthaler conducted a series of prayer meetings for the congregation which spread to the homes and businesses of his parishioners. The *Wachovia Moravian* noted the revival’s success in its January 1896 issue: “The power of the Spirit has been very remarkable. Sinners have been saved, backsliders reclaimed, powerful testimonies given, enmities reconciled.”<sup>139</sup>

The incorporation of revivals helped craft a regional identity for Southern Moravians making them different from their Northern counterparts and more similar to their Southern Protestant neighbors. The Northern Province was aware of the Southern revivals and their success. In 1887, the *Moravian* credited revivals for creating an “encouraging spiritual condition” in the Southern Province.<sup>140</sup> Bishop Francis F. Hagen of the First Moravian Church in Philadelphia hoped a similar revival spirit would emerge in the Northern church. “My heartfelt prayers attend the good work,” he wrote in 1893, “in the hope that the good Moravian example of the South may stir up Moraviandom at the North to go and do likewise. May that blessed old Moravianism of 1727, which is but another name for revivalism, be the bond of peace which unites us to Christ....”<sup>141</sup> Hagen’s appeal fell on deaf ears. The more liturgically-oriented congregations in the Northern Province continued to shun protracted meetings.

---

<sup>138</sup> “Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929,” 60, in Provincial Synod Minutes Box, 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>139</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 35, January 1896, 1; As Sunday schools and adjunct chapels sprung up around Forsyth County in the 1880s, Salem Church adopted the name Home Moravian Church. See chapter three.

<sup>140</sup> *The Moravian*, vol. 32, no. 44, November 1887, 696.

<sup>141</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 8, October 1893, 4; Urban Moravian congregations in the Northern Province were particularly high-church. Congregations in New York City in the late 1850s, for example, wanted the Northern Province to rename itself the Moravian Episcopal Church of America. See Schattschneider, 44.

After the Civil War, Moravians turned to revivals to rebuild their rural congregations and to satisfy the spiritual desires of their largest constituency, poor white farmers. What began as a tepid endorsement of the revival to secure the loyalty of country congregations grew into a popular form of religious expression for Moravians throughout the Southern Province by the mid 1890s. The adoption of revivals in urban congregations was slower than the *Landegemeinen* and Bethania because of a strong tradition of liturgical worship style. This delay proved nearly fatal to the province's only African American congregation, St. Philips. In the end, the embrace of revivalism in its various iterations—camp meetings, union meetings, and protracted meetings—placed Southern Moravians on a divergent religious path from their Northern Brethren. Revivals helped craft a “Southern” Moravianism that was less liturgical, more egalitarian, and decidedly more evangelical than its Northern counterpart.

## CHAPTER THREE

### “BLESSED AND EXTENDED”: MORAVIAN DENOMINATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOLS

It is the Lord's evident will that our work should advance largely by the Sunday school effort. The children, with their teachers, are still the vanguard in the onward movement of the District, and it is right that it should be so.

—*The Wachovia Moravian*, January 1896

In the late nineteenth century, Moravians in North Carolina embraced a successful Southern Protestant formula for the growth of Sunday schools that featured centralization with direct denominational oversight. Denominational Sunday schools helped Moravians increase their numbers and train a new generation in the customs and religious practices of the Southern church. Like the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians before them, denominational schools allowed Southern Moravians to better direct expansion efforts and control the message their children received in the classroom. Sunday school work became a source of regional pride for the Southern Province and reinforced the differences between Northern and Southern Moravian Church.<sup>142</sup>

Sunday schools were popular tools for Protestant Christian education in nineteenth century America. During the antebellum period, evangelical reformers established hundreds of Sunday schools in the South in conjunction with the American Sunday School Union (ASSU). “Union” schools taught children reading, writing, and moral training free from doctrine, making them popular in rural communities where children had few educational opportunities and lacked a dominant religious presence.<sup>143</sup> The union Sunday school model fit well with Moravian

---

<sup>142</sup> Scholars use the term “Sunday schools” broadly when describing Christian education in postbellum America. Because no standard type of Sunday school existed in any denomination, curricula, meeting places, teachers, and students varied. Even in a denomination as small as the Moravian church, and in an area as compact as the Southern Province, Sunday schools differed dramatically from one another. Their common feature was denominational affiliation after 1880.

<sup>143</sup> Sally G. McMillen, *To Raise Up The South: Sunday Schools In Black And White Churches* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 39-40.

theology and evangelical traditions. Antebellum Moravians were ecumenists and preached the importance of universal Christian education. They welcomed students into the classroom irrespective of denominational affiliation and taught them reading, writing, and the “essential truths of Protestant Christianity.”<sup>144</sup>

Some Southerner religious leaders took issue with the ASSU, expressing concern that ecumenical Sunday schools undermined denominational loyalty. As early as 1827, the North Carolina Methodist Episcopal Conference urged its pastors to “preach on the subject of Sunday schools and [encourage] denominational support.”<sup>145</sup> The same year the Fayetteville District passed a motion for its union Sunday schools to be reorganized and be “attached to the Methodist Sunday School Union.”<sup>146</sup> In the 1830s, Methodists in Raleigh proposed separation from a union school they supported with Presbyterians and Baptists so that each denomination “might do its own work in its own way.”<sup>147</sup> Methodists and others saw the non-denominational ASSU as their chief rival in Christian education.<sup>148</sup>

In the antebellum period as the debate over the morality of slavery reached a fevered pitch in the American mainline denominations, white Southern Protestants became suspicious of union Sunday schools. The American Sunday School Union promulgated moral principles by which Christians were to live and the organization could not avoid the issue of slavery when

---

<sup>144</sup> On Moravian antebellum Sunday schools see Jerry Surrat, *Gottlieb Schober of Salem: Discipleship and Ecumenical Vision in an Early Moravian Town* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983) and Marianna C. Brown, *Sunday School Movements in America* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1901), 113-114; Quote from Rohrer, *Hope's Promise*, 186.

<sup>145</sup> Quote from William Mouzon Brabham, *A History of Sunday School Work in the North Carolina Conference Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Greensboro: North Carolina Christian Advocate, 1925), 13.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Sally G. McMillen, email message to author, June 30, 2005.

abolitionists argued that slaveholding itself was a sin. The ASSU, headquartered in Philadelphia, tried its best to remain neutral on this divisive issue, but by the 1850s many white Southerners associated the organization with abolitionism.<sup>149</sup> Whether the disaffection with union schools resulted from mounting concerns over denominational loyalty or the slavery question, the majority of white Southern Protestants rejected ASSU missionaries as the Civil War approached. By 1860, all of the major Southern Protestant denominations abandoned the union model, replacing it with centralized, denominationally run Sunday schools.<sup>150</sup>

As Southern denominations consolidated and centralized their Sunday school work, two subsets of denominational Sunday schools emerged. The first was the “home congregation” school whose purpose was to nurture the family of the church.<sup>151</sup> Home congregation Sunday schools kept the children of the congregation close, controlled, and free from outside religious influences. Southern Protestants used home congregation schools to instill denominational loyalty in their offspring as sectarian competition mounted after the Civil War.<sup>152</sup>

The second type of denominational Sunday school that developed in the nineteenth century was the “mission” Sunday school. Denominations established mission Sunday schools to spread the Gospel and bring new converts into the fold. The template for mission Sunday schools ironically grew out of the work of the ASSU. Agents like Stephen Paxson, who established over 1200 Sunday schools in the American West, understood that with proper care Sunday schools could grow into healthy, prosperous congregations. Paxson outlined the process: “A few papers,

---

<sup>149</sup> Anne Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of An American Institution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 83.

<sup>150</sup> Sally G. McMillen, email message to author, June 30, 2005.

<sup>151</sup> Marlane Druckenmiller, “Linking Church School with Corporate Worship,” MA Th., Moravian Theological Seminary, 1990, 7.

<sup>152</sup> McMillen, 65.

books and personal efforts gather in the children...the parents follow; then the prayer-meeting; then the preacher.”<sup>153</sup> In the South, mission schools were successful in both rural areas and growing cities. Denominational missionaries often founded a Sunday school to test a community’s religious commitment before establishing a church there. Baptists speculated that two-thirds to three-quarters of their congregations in North Carolina evolved from mission Sunday schools. Between 1870 and 1900, Winston’s white and black First Baptist churches established seven missions that grew into independent congregations.<sup>154</sup>

Despite the success their Protestant neighbors experienced with denominational educational efforts, Southern Moravians supported union Sunday schools throughout the antebellum period. Moravians pioneered union Sunday school work in the North Carolina Piedmont. In 1816, members of Salem congregation established a Sunday school in a Lutheran Church to teach children “who have no other opportunity for instruction.”<sup>155</sup> In 1828, Moravians, Lutherans, Methodists, and Baptists in Wachovia established the Stokes County Sunday School Union as an auxiliary arm of the ASSU. Sunday schools in the Stokes district flourished with assistance from Salem, Bethania, Bethabara, and the *Landgemeinen*.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>153</sup> Quote from Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright, *The Big Little School: Sunday Child of American Protestantism* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), 29.

<sup>154</sup> Adelaide Fries, Stuart Thurman Wright, J. Edwin Hendricks, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 153.

<sup>155</sup> MR, 3307.

<sup>156</sup> The Stokes County Union featured Salem and 23 rural Sunday schools: Nazareth, Friendship, Hopewell, Charity (Friedberg), Pleasant Hill, Concord, Brushy Fork, Mount Vernon, Spanish Grove (Bethania), Cedar Grove, Bethabara, Muddy Creek, Zion, Rocky Mount, Union Hill, Hope, Pleasant Grove, Abbotts Creek Union, Yadkin, Union Love, Frost's, and Giliad. List from “The Stokes County Sunday School Minute Book, 1826-1830,” S 736:1, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; On the relationship between the Stokes County Sunday School Union and the ASSU see *The Fourth Report of the American Sunday School Union*, (Philadelphia: Ashmead and Co., 1828), x-xi.

The Stokes County Union suffered in the late antebellum period as Protestant denominations throughout the American South abandoned the union model en-masse. After a lackluster anniversary celebration for the Stokes County Union in 1852, Moravian pastor George Frederic Bahnson lamented the indifference among local churches to Sunday school work. “No denomination except our own,” he wrote, “takes any interest in these benevolent and truly Christian organizations.”<sup>157</sup> Bahnson’s criticism was inaccurate. North Carolina Protestants still supported Sunday school work, just not the union model. In the 1850s, the Methodist “sectarian school” at Mt. Tabor was so popular that it siphoned students away from Bethania’s Sunday school at Spanish Grove in northwest Forsyth County.<sup>158</sup> Moravian clergy occasionally questioned the church’s support of the union model. John Chapman Cooke, pastor of Friedland congregation, wrote in 1858 that the Moravians’ ecumenical stance on Sunday schools robbed them of the chance to build membership once children grew into adults. In Chapman’s opinion, union schools were a “nursery for other denominations.” He expressed his irritation that children came to Moravian-sponsored union schools “in order to receive the advantage of such education as we give them, but [with no] intention that they shall embrace the faith of our church....”<sup>159</sup>

Moravians reorganized the southern-most Sunday schools of the Stokes district into the Forsyth County Sunday School Union in 1859.<sup>160</sup> The Forsyth County Union survived the Civil War, primarily because of the support of the Moravians, but declined after 1869 as Southern Protestants continued to discourage their children from attending union Sunday schools. The Moravians’ heart religion and their belief in the salvation of all who accepted Christ continued

---

<sup>157</sup> MR 5734.

<sup>158</sup> MR 5908; Spanish Grove was listed on an 1828 register for the Stokes County Sunday School Union. It became Olivet Moravian Church located in northwest Winston-Salem.

<sup>159</sup> MR 6299.

their commitment to ecumenism in this venture far past that their Southern Protestant neighbors. This was in sharp contrast to white evangelicals like R. H. Griffith who feared the influence of rival faiths and preferred to train the next generation of loyal churchgoers on their own terms. Griffith declared to fellow North Carolina Baptists at a statewide Sunday school convention in 1874 that “teaching which is not denominational is no [Sunday school] teaching at all.”<sup>161</sup>

As partner churches funneled more of their time and money into denominational Sunday school work, Forsyth County’s union schools suffered. The Sunday schools sponsored by the Hope and New Philadelphia congregations, closed in the mid-1870s because they were unable to find teachers willing to carry on the work.<sup>162</sup> Schools at Friedland and Macedonia that held classes year-round were forced to close during the winter months.<sup>163</sup> As resources and teachers became scarce, the quality of the education offered by the union schools declined. Once regarded as the leading educational institutions in Forsyth County, by the late 1870s many of the union schools were unable to provide even basic education for their students. The pastor of Bethania observed at the 1877 Synod that while there were no lack of pious intentions at the union schools at Spanish Grove and Pleasant Ridge, the educational standards were low and “hence the main element of a prosperous and successful Sunday school [was] in a great measure lacking.”<sup>164</sup>

---

<sup>160</sup> MR 6305-6306.

<sup>161</sup> Quote from McMillen, 60.

<sup>162</sup> “Synodical Report of the Macedonia, Hope, and New Philadelphia Moravian Congregations for the term of years ending May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1877,” B 41:8 Synod of 1877, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>163</sup> “Yearly Report of the Moravian S. S.’s in the Southern Province, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1885” B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>164</sup> “A Report of the Actual Condition of the Bethania Congregation, submitted May 1877 at Salem, NC,” B 41:8 Synod of 1877, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.



Moravians adopted denominational Sunday schools for reasons different than the larger Southern Protestant denominations. The latter assumed control of their Sunday school programs because of sectarianism and fear of union school abolitionists. Moravians moved to centralized denominational control of their Sunday schools because they saw it as their only hope for survival with the next generation. Southern Moravians established their first denominational Sunday school in 1880 and the failed merger with the Northern Province in 1883 provided impetus for the Southern Province to create a denominational Sunday school structure as a permanent vehicle for church extension. During the late 1880s and 1890s, Southern Moravians successfully used Sunday schools to increase their dwindling numbers and train a new generation in the customs and religious practices of the church.

Moravians discovered the potential benefits of denominational Sunday school work accidentally. In March 1880, thirteen residents of Northeastern Forsyth County who wished to start a Moravian church submitted a petition to the Provincial Elders Conference (PEC). The Southern PEC was engaged in merger negotiations with the Northern Province and was unwilling to undertake the support of a new congregation. Therefore the PEC compromised with the group and gave the petitioners permission to establish a Sunday school at the nearby Buffalo Schoolhouse. The program thrived, and in May 1880, the PEC dispatched a minister to preach at the school and “learn the prospects for the erection of a church building and organization” in the community.<sup>165</sup> After the minister reported that he thought a church would prosper, the Southern Province formally organized Providence congregation on November 21, 1880, with a

---

<sup>165</sup> PEC Minutes, March 4, 1880, May 6, 1880, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

membership of ten new Moravians.<sup>166</sup> Between 1880 and 1884, Providence more than quadrupled in size, boasting forty-eight communicant and twelve non-communicant members by the end of 1883. Providence's growth was impressive, particularly when compared to other rural Moravian congregations in Forsyth County, which overall declined an average of five and a half percent during the same period.<sup>167</sup> The results influenced the Southern Province leadership as they called a Synod in January 1884 to end the merger process with the Northern Province.<sup>168</sup> Provincial leaders understood that changes were necessary if the Southern Province were to succeed on its own. The successful growth of Providence, combined with Southern Moravians' decision to go it alone after the 1884 Synod, catalyzed the centralization of the Sunday school effort.<sup>169</sup>

In May 1884, delegates from across the Southern Province assembled at Friedberg to hold a district conference. Few in attendance believed the Southern Province would survive without significant growth in communicant membership. When the discussion at the conference turned to mission and extension work, a delegate from Salem congregation suggested that Sunday schools might offer a solution to their lagging numbers. James T. Lineback, a member of Salem, provincial treasurer, and former treasurer of the Forsyth County Sunday School Union, agreed, observing that Sunday school and church work were "closely connected." He urged the

---

<sup>166</sup> PEC Minutes, December 10, 1880, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>167</sup> *Daily Texts, 1880*, 191-192; *Daily Texts, 1884*, 193-194.

<sup>168</sup> PEC Minutes, December 6, 1883, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>169</sup> "Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929," 43, bound edition located in B 41:13 Provincial Synod Minutes 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.



Figure 2. James T. Lineback (1827-1912)

James T. Lineback, a member of Salem Congregation, served as chair of the Provincial Sunday School Committee from 1884 to 1904. Next to Edward Rondthaler, Lineback was arguably the most powerful influence on Southern Moravian provincial policy in the 1880s and 1890s.

Image courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

province to increase its support in each area. The delegates subsequently passed a resolution creating the Moravian Provincial Sunday School Committee (PSSC) to provide leadership for “maintaining and increasing the Sunday school work of our church.”<sup>170</sup> The resolution stated that each congregation should establish and maintain a Sunday school in its respective sphere of influence. The creation of the PSSC and election of Lineback as chairman of the committee placed control of the Sunday school effort squarely in the hands of the Southern Moravian leadership.<sup>171</sup>

After the 1884 district conference, the PEC summoned the new Provincial Sunday School Committee and instructed it to inspect the province’s Sunday schools, research possibilities for establishing new Sunday schools in “localities that seemed to offer an opening,” and report its findings at the 1885 district conference.<sup>172</sup> The committee’s tour of the province in 1885 revealed an eclectic mix of old union Sunday schools and “home congregation” Sunday schools. Salem boasted the best-attended and organized programs. The “Home” Sunday school in Salem averaged 190 students per week; Elm Street, 135; and the African American congregation at St. Philips, 225.<sup>173</sup> By contrast, the 11 Sunday schools run by Bethania, Bethabara, and the former *Landgemeinen* averaged only 36 students per week. Curricula varied as well. While the majority of schools used the international lessons adopted by the Forsyth County Sunday School

---

<sup>170</sup> Edward Rondthaler, *The Memorabilia of Fifty Years, 1877-1927* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton Co., 1928), 52; “Report of the Annual Conference, held at Friedberg, on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1884,” B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> “To the Moravian Conference, May 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at Macedonia, 1885,” B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>173</sup> After a congregational split in 1876, black Moravians who remained at St. Philips submitted to white Moravian governance in church affairs. This included the Sunday school which after the arrival of pastor James Hall in 1877, operated like the white denominational Sunday schools in Salem and the Moravian country congregations. For more on white governance at St. Philips, see chapter two.

Union, Friedberg and Friedland did not.<sup>174</sup> In an effort to control the message its children received, the PSSC mandated that all Moravian Sunday schools use church-approved curriculum. The committee further strengthened its oversight of provincial Sunday school work by requiring teachers to introduce the tenets of the Moravian catechism into their classrooms to help gather the members of the Sunday schools into the church. Finally, the PSSC took control of and pooled funds from the various programs and redistributed them according to the committee's perception of need.<sup>175</sup>

In 1887, the Provincial Sunday School Committee expanded its work by establishing two more denominational mission Sunday schools in Forsyth County. Both developed into independent congregations by year's end. In the spring, Lineback received a request to start a Sunday school at Oak Grove, located in a neighborhood on the "Hollow Road" eight miles northeast of Salem.<sup>176</sup> The PEC initially had little hope for evangelism there because the area was under "Primitive Baptist influence."<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, Lineback held the first session in an abandoned house and was gratified by a good turnout. Over the summer months, attendance increased and adult attendees erected a brush arbor for preaching services. Christian Lewis Rights organized Oak Grove in the fall as a Moravian congregation, reporting that "a

---

<sup>174</sup> "Yearly Report of the Moravian S. S.'s in the Southern Province, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1885" B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>175</sup> "Minutes of the Fourth Annual Conference of the Southern District of the Moravian Church in the United States: held at Bethabara, May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in the year 1887," 37-39, B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>176</sup> "Oak Grove Moravian Church" historical sketch located in the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

<sup>177</sup> "Triennial Report of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, from January 1884 to November 1887," B 41:14 Regular Synod of the Southern District, 1887, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

considerable number of persons have been converted” and that members of the school were actively engaged in building a structure “for worship and Sunday school purposes combined.”<sup>178</sup>

In 1887, members of Salem congregation also established a Moravian Sunday school in the borough of Centreville, south of Salem. The PEC believed Centreville offered fertile ground for growth because the community possessed “nothing of a religious character.”<sup>179</sup> Rights spent several Sundays during the summer preaching and holding classes there. By September, the result was a building “nearly paid for” housing a “growing Sunday school”<sup>180</sup> Impressed with the Moravian missionary efforts, parents of the students at Centreville petitioned the PEC to form a congregation. Rights organized Centreville Moravian Church on October 2, 1887, with fourteen members.<sup>181</sup>

Providence, Oak Grove, and Centreville—Sunday schools that developed into congregations in a matter of months—demonstrated to the Southern Province leadership how valuable denominational mission Sunday schools could be in the struggle to survive. From 1856 to 1880, Moravians in the South established only two congregations: Macedonia (1856) and Kernersville (1867). Providence, Oak Grove, and Centreville were the first new Moravian congregations in 24 years.<sup>182</sup> The feeder and mission Sunday school models offered pragmatic,

---

<sup>178</sup> PEC Minutes, September 1, 1887, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>179</sup> “Triennial Report of the Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, from January 1884 to November 1887,” B 41:14 Regular Synod of the Southern District, 1887, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>180</sup> Rondthaler, 67.

<sup>181</sup> PEC Minutes, September 21, 1887, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; “Triennial Report of the Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, from January 1884 to November 1887,” B 41:14 Regular Synod of the Southern District, 1887, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>182</sup> Crews, 830.

cost-effective solutions to boost membership; and the provincial leadership seized the opportunity. The 1887 Synod proposed to make the Sunday school method a prominent part of provincial extension work, adopting the following resolution on the recommendation of the Provincial Committee on Church Extension:

In view of the blessings that have attended the efforts of the S.S. Committee appointed by the PEC in organizing new congregations, through the S.S. work, your comm. would earnestly recommend that this system of church extension be adopted as a permanent feature in Church work.<sup>183</sup>

There were, however, irregularities. According to the 1856 provincial constitution, only Synod had the authority to organize new congregations and 30 members were required for each new church start. By constitutional standards, Oak Grove, Centreville, and Providence were illegitimately organized. To continue establishing denominational mission Sunday schools and grow them into new churches, Synod had to delegate authority to organize congregations to another provincial body and reduce the number of communicants necessary to found a new congregation. The 1887 Synod amended the constitution to legitimize these procedures. The revised provincial constitution lowered from 30 to 15 the number of communicants needed for a new congregation and gave the PEC authority to charter churches without formal Synod action.<sup>184</sup> Synods met every three years and before 1887, requiring prospective congregations to wait for Synod to grant official status. After 1887, new churches needed only to apply to the PEC once they achieved the required 15 communicants.

---

<sup>183</sup> “Synods of the Southern District (of portion) of the American Branch of the Brethren’s Unity. Called Synod of 1884,” B 41 Southern Province Synods, 1856-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>184</sup> “Constitution of the Southern District of the American Province of the Moravian Church,” (adopted 1856) B 41:13 Called Synod of 1884, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; B 41 Southern Province Synods, 1856-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province; It is likely Synod chose to make the threshold 15 members given that Providence, Centreville, and Oak Grove had fewer than 20 when they began.

The 1887 Synod further strengthened the denominational character of Moravian Sunday school work. It required that Sunday school superintendents be communicant members of the Moravian Church. Synod gave greater power to Lineback, allowing him to “organize new schools and to appoint the superintendents” where he deemed appropriate.<sup>185</sup> Synod appropriated money from the provincial treasury to provide funding for the Provincial Sunday School Committee and its work. Lastly, the delegates resolved that “whenever through the above instrumentalities the work has attained success sufficient to warrant it, earnest and immediate ministerial labor be given, in order to gather in the fruits of our endeavors at Church extension;” that is, if the Sunday School flourished, the church was to provide clergy as soon as possible to encourage attendees and their families to become communicant members.<sup>186</sup> The 1887 Synod made the break with union Sunday school work complete, establishing denominational Sunday schools as the chief instrument for Moravian church extension in the South.

Edward Rondthaler’s guidance was important during the initial years of the PSSC as he was convinced that the feeder and mission school evangelism could build up the Southern Province of the Moravian Church. Although he never claimed responsibility, Rondthaler was the chief architect of the centralization of Moravian Sunday schools in Wachovia. He saw Salem Congregation as the “mother church” whose Sunday school offspring were “springing up around the common home” and propagating Moravianism throughout Forsyth County.<sup>187</sup> Rondthaler offered a martial appraisal in 1888, likening the work to “an army which is breaking up camp

---

<sup>185</sup> “Synod Minutes 1880 through 1929,” 63, Provincial Synod Minutes Box 2001, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Rondthaler’s analogy became the basis for the name that Salem Congregation uses today: Home Moravian Church; Rondthaler, 81-82.



and moving in the lines of an aggressive campaign.”<sup>188</sup> The 1890 Synod affirmed the centralized denominational Sunday school, the Southern Province’s most aggressive agency, as the best way that “new congregations can be founded and old ones strengthened.”<sup>189</sup>

Church expansion through Sunday school planting was a malleable technique. In its various iterations, whether home congregation schools or mission schools, denominational Sunday schools raised up Moravians in rural and urban settings, providing numerical strength to all churches in the Southern Province, old and new. Home Church enjoyed consistent growth from its Sunday school program during the late 1880s.<sup>190</sup> Friedland’s pastor viewed the Sunday school as the salvation of his congregation. “Our hope is in the young people,” he explained to the 1890 Synod. “So also herein lies our hope for Friedland, because there are a great many children attending this school and some of them the children of Baptist parents.”<sup>191</sup> The pastor of Macedonia expressed similar sentiments in his report: “Our hope is that sometime in the future rich harvest may be reaped from the seed that is being sown.”<sup>192</sup> New Philadelphia Congregation echoed that which was recorded in other congregational reports, declaring its Sunday school the “key to future congregational growth.”<sup>193</sup> Denominational Sunday schools fostered collegiality

---

<sup>188</sup> Ibid, 76.

<sup>189</sup> “Report of PEC, 1890,” B 42:1 Provincial Synod – Southern Province Synod of 1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>190</sup> “Salem Congregation Report, 1890,” B 42:1 Provincial Synod – Southern Province Synod of 1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>191</sup> “Friedland, Macedonia, Oak Grove, Providence, New Philadelphia Report, 1890,” B 42:1 Provincial Synod – Southern Province Synod of 1890, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

among the province's different churches as Moravian students gathered seasonally in Salem to celebrate their common brotherhood with Sunday school celebrations and holiday presentations. The province sponsored conferences for its teachers and superintendents. These gatherings were important forums for the exchange of news and ideas between Moravian lay leaders.<sup>194</sup>

The Moravians accelerated their Sunday school plan in the 1890s and founded twelve congregations from denominational mission schools: Calvary (1893), Union Cross (1893), Wachovia Arbor (1893), Fulp (1893), Fairview (1895), Mizpah (1896), Moravia (1896), Christ (1896), Mayodan (1896), Enterprise (1898), Willow Hill (1898), and Bethesda (1899).<sup>195</sup> The return on the Southern Province's investment was considerable. In a single decade, between 1889 and 1899, the number of Moravian communicants in the Southern Province increased from 1,759 to 3,041, or 86 percent. In 1889, the Southern Province had 14 preaching stations in two North Carolina counties. By 1899 the number had risen to 25 in four counties. During the 1890s, the Southern Province was the fastest growing district in the worldwide Moravian Unity.<sup>196</sup>

With denominational Sunday schools, Southern Moravians openly competed with other Southern Protestants for children and communicant members. Denominational competition made Southern Moravians more like their Southern Protestant neighbors and less like their brethren in the Northern Province. Sunday schools mirrored the evangelical leanings of their sponsoring denominations. In the South, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian classrooms were rife with conversion experiences of the young. As Southern Moravians adopted the Southern Protestant denominational model, the salvation of souls superseded literacy as the primary classroom goal.

---

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 17, July 1894, 1.

<sup>195</sup> Crews, 830.

<sup>196</sup> *Daily Texts, 1891*, 136; *Daily Texts, 1901*, 176-177; Hamilton, 355, 445.

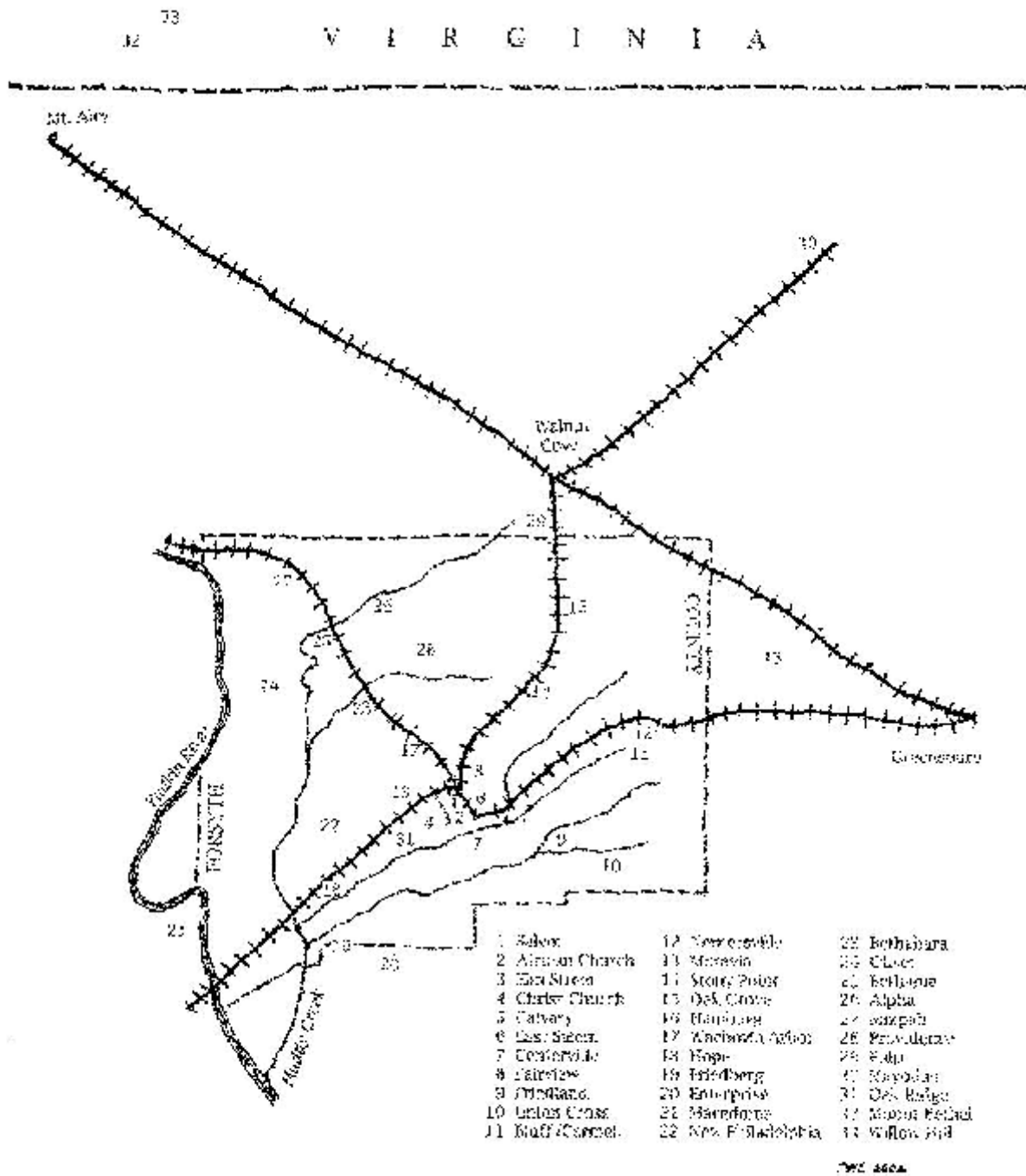


Figure 3. Moravian Sunday schools and Preaching Places, 1896.  
 Map From C. Daniel Crews et al, *With Courage for the Future*, 434.  
 Based on a map published in *The Wachovia Moravian*, October 1896.

Image courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

Whereas in the 1870s Southern Moravian ministers worried about the educational component of their Sunday schools, in the 1880s and 1890s, Moravian leaders worried for the salvation of their children. The 1884 district conference affirmed that in addition to building up souls in the church, the “true aim and purpose of our Sunday School work is to bring souls to Christ....”<sup>197</sup>

Likewise, the 1893 conference recommended a “more earnest effort to accomplish the conversion of scholars as a fruit of Sunday School work....”<sup>198</sup>

Denominational Sunday Schools were important in the American South as the region rebuilt its social institutions following the Civil War. In *Rebuilding Zion*, Daniel Stowell argues Southern white churches used Sunday schools to reinforce the perception of regional distinctiveness and further the cause of Southern Redemption.<sup>199</sup> Historian Sally McMillen offers broader analysis of postbellum Southern Sunday Schools in *To Raise Up the South*. McMillen looks at Sunday Schools in seven of the region’s largest and most influential denominations: the Southern Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church South, African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Presbyterian Church.<sup>200</sup> She argues both white and black churches saw Sunday Schools as central to “uplifting the region, its people, and its

---

<sup>197</sup> “Minutes of the Moravian Annual Conference held at Friedberg, NC May 9<sup>th</sup> 1884,” B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>198</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 3, May 1893, 2.

<sup>199</sup> Stowell, 122.

<sup>200</sup> The majority of Southern Protestants attended Baptist, Methodist, or Presbyterian churches and Sunday schools after the Civil War. Smaller religious bodies like the Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Quakers had Sunday schools and by 1890 these smaller Southern Protestant denominations accounted for nearly 20 percent of the South’s entire religious population. Statistics from the Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890. Vol. 11: Report on the Statistics of Churches in the United States. Bureau of the Census; McMillen, xiii.

churches” after the Civil War.<sup>201</sup> McMillen comments on the connection between denominational growth and Sunday schools in the South, arguing denominations saw Sunday schools as a way to help restore their membership to pre-Civil War levels. She does not suggest the denominations she studied specifically used Sunday schools as an expansion tool, nor did they aggressively establish denominational Sunday schools with the expressed intention of growing them into autonomous congregations.

As Southern Moravians became more like their Southern Protestant neighbors, they became less like their Northern Moravian brethren. Southern Moravian Sunday school efforts contrasted significantly with that of the Northern Province, for the latter supported decentralized non-denominational Sunday schools well into the twentieth century. Northern Moravian leaders encouraged their churches to establish Sunday schools for their children, yet the province did not create a central agency to administer those schools. The Northern Province’s push for centralization and denominational control of Sunday schools began in 1931 when the Northern Province created a Board of Christian Education to supervise and spur interest in its Sunday school programs. Forty years after the Southern Province placed Sunday schools under the direction of the PSSC, the Northern Board of Christian Education pushed for better conversion rates of children, which, it argued, “led to increased membership in Church.”<sup>202</sup>

It is interesting that Rondthaler, who led the drive for denominational oversight of Sunday school work, had personal experience with the Northern Province’s decentralized approach to Christian education. In 1860, while a seminary student in Bethlehem, Rondthaler and his classmates established an ASSU Sunday school among gypsy boatmen on the Lehigh

---

<sup>201</sup> McMillen, x-xii.

<sup>202</sup> “Tentative Agenda Conference of Invited Delegates Moravian College and Theological Seminary February 5-6, 1936,” Board of Christian Education, 1931-1956, Box 1, Moravian Archives, Northern Province.

River. This “Philadelphia Sabbath Association” was entirely staffed by seminarians. From 1884 to 1901 there were no regular Sabbath services at “West Side” Sunday school, but seminary students occasionally preached there. The Sunday school did not enjoy the official support of the Northern Province PEC until 1901, when it was organized as the West Side Moravian congregation.<sup>203</sup>

The Northern Province held onto union Sunday schools longer than the Southern Province for several reasons. First, the ASSU enjoyed stronger support in Northern states, particularly in Pennsylvania because it was headquartered in Philadelphia. In Bethlehem, Moravian Sunday schools organized after the Civil War were connected to the ASSU. Second, because the Northern Province never experienced the desperation to secure new members which the Southern Province felt following the failed merger of the provinces, it was not driven to centralize and directly manage its Sunday schools. For most of the nineteenth century, the Northern Province focused its home mission outreach on Native Americans and the German immigrant population in the Midwestern states. Third, the Northern Province boasted a larger geographic area than the Southern Province. According to Hamilton, the Southern Province comprised a “tight nucleus” of churches around Salem and this made central oversight feasible. Conversely, because of the distances separating its congregations, centralization and direct denominational oversight of Sunday school work in the Northern Province was impractical until the evolution of faster communication and transportation in the twentieth century.<sup>204</sup>

---

<sup>203</sup> “Handbook of the West Side Moravian Church, Bethlehem, PA, 1990,” 4, West Side Sunday School box, Moravian Archives, Northern Province; Harry Emilius Stocker, *A Home Mission History of the Moravian Church in the United States and Canada*, (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church Publication Committee, 1924), 132.

<sup>204</sup> “Records pertaining to the West Bethlehem Chapel and the W.B.S.S.A.,” Box “West Bethlehem Sunday School Record, August 3, 1862 – December 27, 1863 Inclusive August 16, 1865 – October 29, 1865” Moravian Archives, Northern Province; Hamilton, 444.

When Southern Moravians realized that outreach through Sunday school expansion could increase their dwindling numbers, they dared to hope their province could survive the failure of the proposed merger with the Northern Province. The two North American Moravian provinces, which previously were divided only by geographic distance, increasingly became separate entities with distinctive traditions. Southern Moravians aggressively emulated their Protestant neighbors, becoming more like them than their Moravian brethren to the north. At the 1885 district conference Lineback prayed that through Sunday schools, “Our Church be blessed and extended, and many souls saved.”<sup>205</sup> His prayer was answered. Between 1880 and 1900, Sunday schools proved to be means by which the Southern Moravian Church saved itself and forged a distinctive identity from the Northern Province.

---

<sup>205</sup> “Minutes of the Second Annual Conference of the Moravian Church, South,” (1885) B 71:8 Annual Conference of the Southern District 1884-1888, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### “PATRIOTIC COMMUNICANTS”: THE MATURE SOUTHERN CHURCH

The growth during 1892 was so large that a diminution might reasonably have been expected in the following year, but, on the contrary, there has been a most decided increase. What the Southern Church now needs to do is to lay to heart the apostle's example, “of forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before.”

—*The Wachovia Moravian* January, 1894

In the 1890s, the Southern Moravian Church matured, achieving independence and confidence in its ability to attract new members to the Lord's work. The “mature” Southern Moravian church was shaped by regional denominational competition and its desire to distinguish itself from its Southern Protestant brethren. Three aspects of denominational life allow quantification of the Southern Moravian church's maturation: church publications; material culture, and evangelical outreach programs. All had an impact on postbellum Southern Protestant denominations as they rebuilt their institutions and expanded their reach in Southern society.

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of religious periodicals as a way for Protestant denominations to communicate with their adherents.<sup>206</sup> For many churchgoers, a subscription to a church newspaper was an expression of denominational loyalty which in turn, strengthened affiliation.<sup>207</sup> Denominational periodicals reflected regional religious attitudes. During the antebellum period, sectionalism manifested itself in the editorials of countless religious newspapers as the major denominations split over the issue of slavery. Southern Protestant religious newspapers in particular, passionately defended the political positions that their

---

<sup>206</sup> Candy Gunther Brown, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing and Reading in America, 1789-1880* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 145.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*



sponsoring denominations took during the Civil War. In defeat, Southern Protestants seized upon religious publications as a way to remain distinct from their Northern counterpart. Southern Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists, sought to produce “safe” religious papers that reinforced their claim to being the purest form of their denomination in the reconstructed union. In addition, Southern Protestant newspapers perpetuated the idea that Southern religious institutions were superior to their Northern entities, and that religious reunion should be avoided at all costs.<sup>208</sup>

Southern Moravians likewise increased their publishing efforts following the failed merger with the Northern Province. They began their own denominational newspaper in 1893. The decision to publish a periodical independent of the Northern Province’s paper, *The Moravian*—which was originally intended to serve all in the North American church—suggests the extent to which the Southern Province saw itself as, and had actually become, a mature Southern Protestant denomination. Furthermore, the desire to publish their own paper and the name they chose for it—the *Wachovia Moravian*—indicated an emergent regional denominational identity among Southern Moravians.<sup>209</sup>

The editors of the *Wachovia Moravian* were explicit in their intention to make the newspaper the official organ for Southern Moravianism. The first editorial in the first issue explained that the purpose of the publication was to “help the Moravian cause...in the South.”<sup>210</sup> By focusing its efforts exclusively on the Southern Province, the *Wachovia Moravian* differentiated its message from the *Moravian*, which devoted only a single column in each multi-page issue to Southern church news. The *Wachovia Moravian* was simple in its organization and scope. Its initial run offered four to five pages of events in Wachovia’s various churches, church

---

<sup>208</sup> Stowell, 100.

<sup>209</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 1, March 1893, 1.

statistics and editorials urging its readers to participate in the growth of the province—a veritable call to arms for the Southern Moravian laity. It provided revival schedules, announced Sunday school festivals, holiday celebrations, and even reprinted one of Rondthaler’s selected sermons each month.

Southern Provincial leaders intended the *Wachovia Moravian* as a lifeline for Moravians who had moved away from Wachovia to other areas in the South.<sup>211</sup> The success of Southern Moravian home missions, particularly the Provincial Sunday School Committee, drove the organization of several churches in areas outside of Wachovia’s original geographic footprint. The *Wachovia Moravian* provided a way to connect rural Moravians and Moravians living in cities where no congregation existed, to the center of the province. As the editor observed in the January 1895 issue:

As yet our congregations are too greatly restricted to the country immediately around Salem. We need congregations at a greater distance to serve as new centres [sic] for the spread of the Moravian cause. In this work we need the assistance of our members who reside in other places. Let them unite more closely with each other, and carry on some form of Christian activity together. They may be able to start a Sunday School, or a Prayer Meeting, or a Missionary Society. Wherever there are only as many as two of them, something can be done that will produce a Moravian congregation by and by. Indeed several of the best recent successes have grown out of the efforts of a single member of a friend of the Church.<sup>212</sup>

Just as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians published religious periodicals to maintain communication among their scattered members, Moravians used the *Wachovia Moravian* to keep their members near and far abreast of newsworthy events in the Southern Province.<sup>213</sup>

---

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 2, February 1893, 1.

<sup>212</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 21, January 1895, 1.

<sup>213</sup> Brown, 147.

At the same time, the *Wachovia Moravian* helped Southern Moravians differentiate themselves from their Southern Protestant peers. Historian Candy Brown argues that denominations, whether old or new, well or poorly established, “used periodicals to maintain identity as distinct from perceived competitors” as they sought new members.<sup>214</sup> Indeed, the harder the Moravians worked to emulate the periodical publication efforts of mainstream Southern Protestants, the more they began to think of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others as their religious competitors. Editorials in the *Wachovia Moravian* pointed out the qualities that set Moravianism apart from other Protestant churches, such as its “distinctive forms of worship” or its place as the “first Protestant Church...baptized with the blood of martyrs.”<sup>215</sup> Editors urged readers to remain loyal to the faith and warned that Moravians who disputed the doctrinal positions of the church faced “dismissal to other denominations.”<sup>216</sup>

The *Wachovia Moravian* played a critical role in the maturation of the Southern Moravian church because it encouraged its members to appreciate and comment on their religious traditions. Editorials in the newspaper helped fashion a denominational distinctiveness and became a tool for shaping and defining Southern Moravian identity. Edward Rondthaler offered such an appraisal in an 1895 column he penned for the paper: “We all know how frequently the question is asked: ‘Who are the Moravians?’ and sometimes the answers given, even by older members, are woefully inadequate. A little reading [of the *Wachovia Moravian*] before you leave home, will enable you to give an intelligent and helpful reply to this oft-repeated question.”<sup>217</sup> In this way, the *Wachovia Moravian* helped its readers understand how

---

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 62, April 1898, 1.

<sup>216</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 47, January 1897, 1.

<sup>217</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 28, July 1895, 1.

they were different from other Southern Protestants and how to relate the differences to potential converts.

The paper shaped its readers' understanding of Southern Moravian history as well. The *Wachovia* editor dubbed Bethabara the "mother" congregation of the Southern Moravian Church. Prior to the failed merger, Moravians in North Carolina told their story in terms of their migration from Pennsylvania. After 1893, the centerpiece of their story became the colonial North Carolina experience beginning with the founding of Bethabara. The *Wachovia Moravian* published monthly articles about meetings of the Wachovia Historical Society (WHS), a group founded by members of Salem Congregation for the "collection, preservation and dissemination of every thing related to the history, antiquities, and literature of the Moravian Church in the South...and religious development of North Carolina and the adjoining States."<sup>218</sup> As the WHS mission statement suggests, by the 1890s Moravians in the Southern United States increasingly viewed themselves as a part of the Southern Protestant community.

Adelaide Fries, member of the WHS and later the province's first archivist, moderated a monthly historical forum in the *Wachovia Moravian* called "Chips from Historic Timber." Fries explained that to many in the church, the history of Wachovia was a mystery, and it was the responsibility of Southern Moravians "to work it into shape."<sup>219</sup> Fries asked her readers to submit historical questions and "bits of history, traditions handed down from father to son," for her to research and discuss in the column. In so doing, she invited readers to define what was significant to know and share about the Southern Moravian church.<sup>220</sup>

---

<sup>218</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 13, March 1894, 4.

<sup>219</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 27, May 1895, 6.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*

The *Wachovia Moravian* was part of a larger, concerted effort of the Southern Moravian leadership to increase their publication output at the end of the nineteenth century. The Northern Province had a publication office, but after the failed merger, the Southern Province preferred to produce and use its own printed material, much like Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian synods in the postwar South. The Moravians in North Carolina created their own publication office in 1899 to develop materials with which they could educate their members and attract new recruits.<sup>221</sup>

The Southern Province intended its publications to define what a true Southern Moravian was supposed to be and used them to demonstrate to its membership how it was like and different from its competitors. As the Southern Province dramatically increased its numbers in the 1890s, concern about denominational loyalty rose to the fore of provincial consideration. Moravians leaders expressed concern over their members' lack of interest in church customs and ritual. Rondthaler, for example, believed that the Province needed to train a "drilled force of good people" to teach Moravian traditions to new church members so that they might become "patriotic communicants."<sup>222</sup> Editorials in the *Wachovia Moravian* praised congregations that incorporated appropriate customs and practices into their worship and criticized those that did not.<sup>223</sup> The paper held up Kernersville Moravian as the model example of congregational assimilation because it hosted informational sessions on "subjects of Moravian interest."

---

<sup>221</sup> In addition to denominational newspapers, Southern Protestant publishing houses produced an array of Sunday school literature. See McMillen, 89-120.

<sup>222</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 43, September 1896, 1; D.Z. Smith, pastor of Friedberg, likewise called for "church patriotism" among all Southern Moravians, arguing, "Disloyalty to our church is I believe one main cause why we have to mourn the sad want of a true missionary spirit...." See "Report of the Congregation at Friedberg NC presented before the Synod held May 1877," B 41 Synods of the Southern District (or portion) of the American Branch of the Brethren's Unity Provincial Synod 1874 and 1877, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>223</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 22, December 1894, 3.

Members and visiting neighbors learned about the denomination by attending lectures entitled “Church Customs,” “Our Church’s Liturgy and Music,” “What We Stand For,” and “Moravian Church and Education.”<sup>224</sup>

Convinced the “education of its people into the principles and rules of true Moravianism must, in a large measure, be accomplished,” the provincial publication office produced booklets that described the Southern Moravian experience.<sup>225</sup> Chief among these was *The Church Book of the Moravians in the Southern District* which contained a brief history of the *Unitas Fratrum*, a statement of Moravian religious beliefs, and rules for membership in the denomination. The 1899 District Conference recommended that copies of the *Church Book* be placed in every Moravian household so that members might become familiar with Southern Province history and effect “the thorough assimilation of our large new membership into Moravian ideas and forms.”<sup>226</sup> The 1899 conference also announced the publication of a shorter Moravian hymnbook as a resource for poverty-stricken congregations that could not afford the full-length version.<sup>227</sup> The PEC believed the shorter hymnbook would help make congregations “especially in the country, better acquainted with Moravian Liturgies Hymns and Tunes.”<sup>228</sup>

In some ways, the harder Southern Moravians worked to distinguish themselves from their denominational rivals, the more they seemed to emulate them. This was evident in the late nineteenth century when congregations across the Southern Province began renovating and

---

<sup>224</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 37, March 1896, 1.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> PEC Minutes, December 21, 1899, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>227</sup> Minutes of the Southern Province Synod of 1896, B 42: 4 Provincial Synods – Southern Province Synod of 1896, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>228</sup> PEC Minutes, December 21, 1899, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province

building new houses of worship. Antebellum Moravian congregations were generally loath to build new worship spaces. In 1865, nine of the eleven congregations in the Southern Province worshiped in their original church buildings.<sup>229</sup> Following the failed merger, however, Southern Moravians began to think of themselves as viable players in mainline Southern Protestantism. This change was reflected in the decision to build new and renovate existing church buildings and the architectural styles that they chose. Congregations replaced the fieldstone and clapboard *Gemeinhaus* or “common house”—worship architecture that had defined the denomination for generations—with houses of worship that incorporated the features of Gothic revival architecture.<sup>230</sup>

Until the failed merger with the Northern Province, Southern Moravian church leaders believed the appropriate way to grow membership was the conversion of ethnic Germans. As late as 1884, the Southern PEC continued to blame the province’s numerical stagnation on the lack of German inhabitants in the region. “We are a very small District,” they wrote in an official document to the Northern Province. “There is no German emigration which, with its greater affinity for Moravianism, can form a source of enlargement....”<sup>231</sup> The success of the denominational Sunday schools in the 1880s demonstrated to Southern Moravians that their brand of Protestantism was attractive to non-Germans, and the formation of a dozen new

---

<sup>229</sup> Of the four that had buildings younger than 25 years old, only one congregation, St. Philips was founded before 1845. Crews, 830.

<sup>230</sup> John J. G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*, (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982), 31n.; Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth Century America* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 204-207; For additional information on Moravian religious architecture in colonial North Carolina see William J Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture and Town Planning* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967) and June Todd Smith, “Bethabara Church and *Gemeinhaus*: Architectural Forms and Moravian Theology,” MA th., Chapel Hill, 1973.

<sup>231</sup> PEC, “The Recent Proposed Union Between the Northern and Southern Districts of the American Moravian Church,” Salem, June 2, 1884. Folder B 41: 13, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

congregations from this work in the 1890s provided the motivation and the means for Moravians to revise the appearance of their worship architecture.

Gothic revival architecture became the preferred style among American Protestant denominations in the late nineteenth century reflecting the popularity of Robert Upjohn's Trinity Church (1846) in New York. Its architecture, inspired by European cathedrals, demonstrated, in the words of architectural historian Robert Packard, a longing for "true Christianity of medieval forms and ornament."<sup>232</sup> This style appealed to Christians across the nation regardless of region or denomination.<sup>233</sup> In the South, the style became ubiquitous among mainline Protestants, who continually searched for "authentic" Christianity.<sup>234</sup> Southern Moravian churches constructed in the late nineteenth century drew upon the Gothic revival, which was a departure from the simple, unadorned European worship houses that Moravians erected in North America during the colonial period. Church architecture, such as the *Gemeinhaus* represented the Moravians' theocratic past. In order for them to become a truly distinctive Southern Protestant denomination, Southern Moravians eliminated the material reminders of their European roots and shared spiritual lineage with the Northern Province. The only two Moravian churches that survived the architectural purge of the 1890s were Bethabara, the Southern mother congregation, and Home, the Southern model congregation.<sup>235</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup> Robert T. Packard and Balthazar Korab, *Encyclopedia of American Architecture* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1995), 268.

<sup>233</sup> Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 1; Blumenson, 31n.

<sup>234</sup> Donald G. Mathews, "Religion in the South: Authenticity and Purity—Pulling Us Together, Tearing Us Apart," in *Religious Diversity and American Religious History: Studies in Traditions and Cultures*, ed. Walter H. Conser Jr., and Sumner B. Twiss, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 73.

<sup>235</sup> Crews 806-812; 830.



Calvary (1889), Christ (1896), and Fairview (1900) Moravian churches offer the best brick and mortar examples of the incorporation of Gothic revival elements in the Southern Province. Christ, Calvary, and Fairview were urban churches, located in Winston and Salem. They had a larger percentage of affluent members than did rural Moravian churches and accordingly could afford greater ornamentation. Christ Church (figure 5) featured numerous Gothic revival elements: lancet arched windows, an oculus with cinquefoil, pinnacles with finials toppers, and corner buttresses.<sup>236</sup> Calvary (figure 4) had stained glass windows with cinquefoil, pinnacles with finials at eave terminations, a bay window and arched stained glass windows. Fairview (figure 6) enjoyed oculi, a circular stained glass window decorated with Star of David tracery, pinnacles at its eave terminations, numerous lancet arch windows, and gable trim.<sup>237</sup> Examples of North Carolina Piedmont urban Protestant churches of the same era are numerous: First Baptist, First Presbyterian, and St. Paul's Episcopal churches in Winston offer similar architectural scale, ornamentation, and building materials as the aforementioned Moravian examples (figures 7-9).

Gothic revival worship architecture was not limited to urban settings. Robert Upjohn expanded on the popularity of Trinity Church by publishing a book of architectural plans that he supplied to poor Episcopal parishes around the country free of charge so that they could erect modest wood Gothic churches in “the smallest towns in out-of-the-way places.”<sup>238</sup> The

---

<sup>236</sup> Packard, 673.

<sup>237</sup> Blumenson, 30-33.

<sup>238</sup> Packard, 269.

Figure 4. Calvary Moravian Church

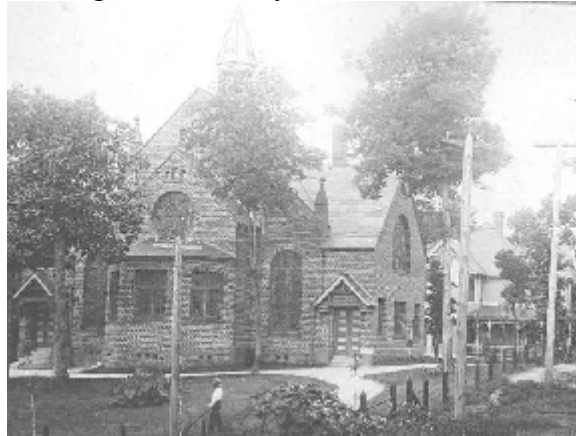


Figure 5. Christ Moravian Church



Figure 6. Fairview Moravian Church



Images courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

Figure 7. First Baptist of Winston (c. 1895)



Figure 8. First Presbyterian Church of Winston (c. 1899)

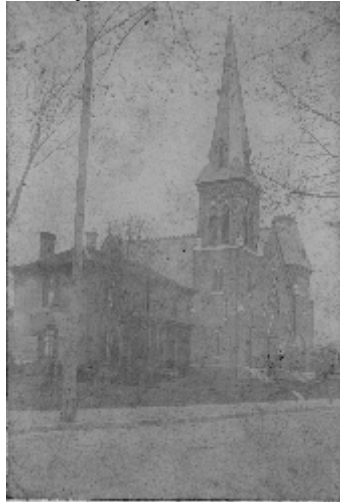


Figure 9. St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Winston (c. 1900)



Images courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

Figure 10. Centreville Moravian Church



Figure 11. Bethesda Moravian Church

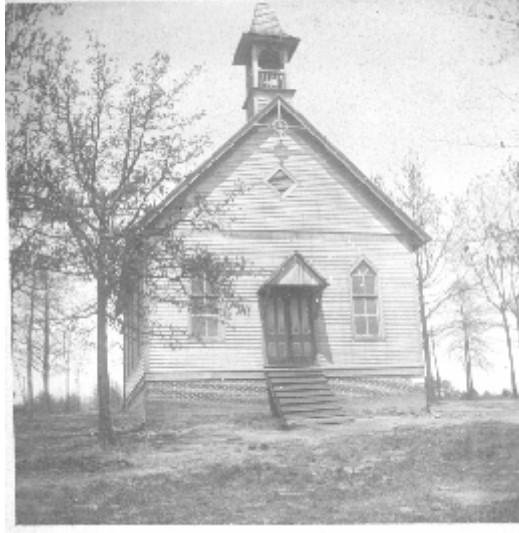
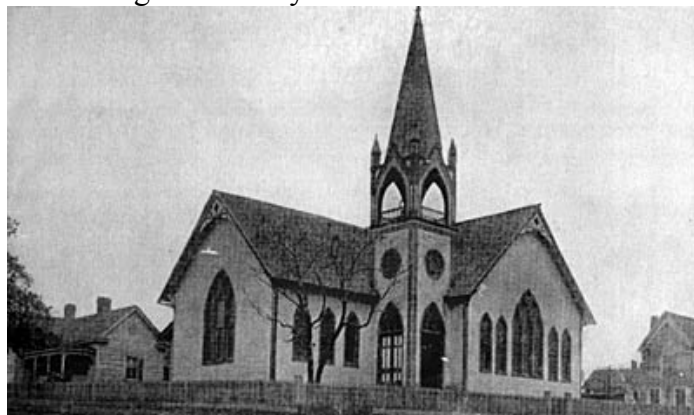


Figure 12. Mayodan Moravian Church



Images courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

vernacular form of Upton's work, in which country churches emulated the high ecclesiastical style he developed with board and batten construction, became known as "Carpenter Gothic." Other Protestant denominations, including the Moravians, eventually adopted the style.

Rural Moravian churches built in Carpenter Gothic styles included Centreville, Bethesda, and Mayodan. Centreville Chapel (1886) was constructed in an L-fashion with the main gabled entrance located in the angle. A large steeple with a bell dominated the steeply gabled roofline. It featured board-and-batten siding with a mix of lancet-arched and Romanesque-trimmed stained-glass windows with tracery along the long facades (figure 10). Bethesda (1899), located two and a half miles west of Salem, is a picturesque representation of a Gothic revival American country church with a steep roofline, arched windows, board-and-batten siding, and a simple gabled entryway and trim (figure 11).

Mayodan (1900), located in northwestern Rockingham County, was also built in an L-fashion. Its Carpenter Gothic revival elements were numerous: board-and-batten siding, lancet arched stained-glass windows with tracery, a stained-glass oculus, gable trim, and a steeple topped with a tall spire, reminiscent of a castle battlement (figure 12). An editorial in the December 1896 *Wachovia Moravian* hailed the new church at Mayodan as "thoroughly modern," further evidence of the denomination's concern for building churches that looked like contemporary Protestant houses of worship.<sup>239</sup>

Established rural Moravian congregations followed suit, renovating or replacing their worship spaces with buildings in the Carpenter Gothic style. Friedberg offers a fine example of

---

<sup>239</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 46, December 1896, 1.

this trend. Moravian settlers built Friedberg's *Gemeinhaus* in 1788 according to the same design used in their other North American settlements.<sup>240</sup>

Moravians brought the *Gemeinhaus* with them from Europe seeking to smooth the transition from the Old World to New. Members of the church during colonial and antebellum era lived their Christianity and incorporated religious rituals into every aspect of their lives.<sup>241</sup> The *Gemeinhaus*, a building used for worship, living, and learning, was an architectural manifestation of Moravian beliefs. With the *Gemeinhaus*, the line between sacred and secular blurred. Each house featured a *Saal* or worship hall and other rooms designated as dormitories, classrooms, and living quarters for the pastor and his family.<sup>242</sup>

Changes in form and function of the *Gemeinhaus* corresponded to the changes in Moravian identity in the Southern Province at the end of the nineteenth century. Friedberg's 1900 renovation transformed a typical *Gemeinhaus* into a rural Southern Gothic revival church (figure 14). Prior to renovation, the exterior of the Friedberg *Gemeinhaus* looked like a central European structure, featuring architectural elements such as splayed eaves or a "kick" at the roofline, asymmetrically spaced windows, side entrances into the *Saal*, an interior chimney, and fieldstone foundation (figure 13). The only feature that suggested the building was a religious structure was a belfry located at the southern apex of the roofline.

Pietistic colonial and antebellum Moravians shunned aesthetic enhancements to their worship architecture. The amount of ornamentation added to the building makes Friedberg's renovation significant. It removed the side entrances to the church, replacing them with a single

---

<sup>240</sup> Murtagh, 25n.

<sup>241</sup> Gollin, 20.

<sup>242</sup> Thorp, 17-18.

Figure 13. Friedberg's *Gemeinhaus* (c. 1885)



Figure 14. Friedberg's *Gemeinhaus*, post-renovation (c. 1900)



Images courtesy of the Moravian Archives, Southern Province

entrance into the sanctuary under the steeple, and added a striking cinquefoil stained glass window above the doorway. The congregation's concern with appearances caused them to replace the interior brick chimney with a smaller, metallic smokestack. Evenly-spaced lancet arched windows, running the length of the sanctuary and flanking the entrance, replaced the original asymmetrically-spaced rectangular windows. The redesign straightened the end of the roofline, removing the kick reminiscent of European buildings. At the same time Friedberg congregation renovated their *Gemeinhaus* they built a separate parsonage. Removing the pastor's living quarters from the building announced that the building was a church and no longer a multipurpose community center. The resulting architectural statement pointed to the Moravian desire to be considered a mainline Southern Protestant denomination.<sup>243</sup>

At the same time Moravians were updating the appearance of their worship architecture to resemble that of other mainline Southern Protestants, they were raising their profile among North Carolina evangelicals through their support of Christian Endeavor. Christian Endeavor was attractive to Moravians because of its emphasis on ecumenism and lay work—the driving force behind the expansion of the Southern Province in the 1890s. Southern Moravians used the Christian Endeavor movement to increase their numbers and encourage active participation among their youth.

Christian Endeavor was founded in Maine by Reverend Francis Edward Clark in 1881 at a Congregationalist Church as a religious society for adolescents focused around weekly prayer meetings and evangelism.<sup>244</sup> Christian Endeavor was wholly a Protestant movement with four

---

<sup>243</sup> Murtagh, 23-25; Jennifer Bean Bower, *Images of America: Moravians in North Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 110.

<sup>244</sup> Francis E. Clark, *World Wide Endeavor: The Story of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor* (Philadelphia: Gillespie, Metzger, and Kelley, 1895), 133-134.



fundamental principles: the Confession of Christ, Christian Service, Loyalty to Christ's Church and Fellowship with Christ's people.<sup>245</sup>

The Confession of Christ called for active participation in weekly prayer meetings and commitment to the Christian Endeavor society. Service for Christ stipulated that endeavurers engaged in mission work. The Loyalty to Christ's Church required that society members belong to and attend a church while the Fellowship with Christ's People encouraged an ecumenical spirit. Members signed a pledge to uphold the dictates of the fundamentals and avoid worldly temptations. Committees designed to buttress the four principles within the denomination and community included social, temperance, missionary, music, pulpit flower, Sunday school, "calling", and "good literature."<sup>246</sup>

Christian Endeavor was a precursor to the Social Gospel movement of the early twentieth century.<sup>247</sup> Endeavor spokespersons, like Baptist minister Howard D. Grose, believed that Protestant Christianity could improve civilization by applying Christian ethics to societal ills. "The Christian Endeavor Movement," wrote Grose in the *New York Times*, "was one of the means of changing the thoughts of the church from creed to character, from dogma to deed."<sup>248</sup> Christian Endeavor's message of piety and reform found ready ears among liberal Protestants in the Northern United States and beyond. By the mid 1880s, evangelicals around the world were

---

<sup>245</sup> Francis Edward Clark, *The Christian Endeavor Manual* (Boston: United Society of Christian Endeavor, 1903), 34-35.

<sup>246</sup> Clark, *World Wide Endeavor*, 21, 48, 124.

<sup>247</sup> Clark, *Christian Endeavor Manual*, 36-38.

<sup>248</sup> "Plymouth Church Filled With Visiting Endeavourers," *New York Times*, July 11, 1892.

following the lead of Clark and his followers as Christian Endeavor grew into a full-fledged evangelical movement.<sup>249</sup>

The popularity of Christian Endeavor among evangelicals did not immediately transfer to the American South. Mistrust of Northern Protestant institutions and sectarianism hindered the movement's spread among Protestants below the Mason-Dixon Line. The first Southern Christian Endeavor societies emerged in the 1890s, nearly a decade after the movement gained momentum in New England. Clark criticized Southern evangelicals for their failure to embrace it. "Opposition in the Southern States of the Union," he wrote in 1895, "has been greater than any other part of the world."<sup>250</sup> In North Carolina, Methodists and Moravians were the first to champion the movement. Methodist support was particularly important to Christian Endeavor's acceptance among mainline North Carolina Protestant churches because they comprised the second largest evangelical Christian group in the state.<sup>251</sup>

The religious outreach programs that Christian Endeavor promoted fit well with Southern Moravian efforts to reach new members. Whereas Sunday schools were aimed at and successful in bringing children and their parents into the Moravian congregations, Christian Endeavor was important for attracting adolescents and young adults to the church. The growth of Winston and Salem in the late nineteenth century provided a pool of young people from which the movement could draw and the industrialization of the communities magnified the societal ills that Social Gospel groups addressed. Calvary Moravian Church founded the first Moravian society in September 1892 with 13 members. Support for the movement in the church grew rapidly. By

---

<sup>249</sup> By 1890, Christian Endeavor had member societies as far away as Lebanon and Japan. See Clark, *The Christian Endeavor Manual*.

<sup>250</sup> Clark, *World Wide Endeavor*, 533-534.

<sup>251</sup> Report on the Statistics of Churches in the United States, Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, vol. 9, xviii.

May 1894, Moravian endeavurers had grown to more than 250 with nine of the fifteen congregations in the Southern Province forming societies.<sup>252</sup>

The success of Christian Endeavor in the province prompted Southern Moravian leaders to call for the formation of a denominational union. Such a union, argued the editor of the *Wachovia Moravian*, would improve Moravianism's standing among Southern evangelicals. "Other Churches have their own [Christian Endeavor] unions," remarked the editor, "why should we not?"<sup>253</sup> In the summer of 1894, Salem hosted the first Moravian Christian Endeavor convention for members of the province's various congregations and elected delegates to send to the national convention in Cleveland, Ohio.<sup>254</sup> By 1895, the Southern Province boasted the greatest proportional membership in Christian Endeavor among its youth in the state, and second only to the Methodists in overall membership.<sup>255</sup> Christian Endeavor grew so fast in the Southern Province that some Moravians privately worried the movement might soon "burn itself out."<sup>256</sup>

National Christian Endeavor leaders believed statewide unions were important to renewing the platforms of local and district organizations, serving as "a rallying-point for the leading endeavor workers from all parts of the state."<sup>257</sup> In 1894 Moravians began corresponding with Christian Endeavor groups across the state, and discovering interest, proposed a statewide

---

<sup>252</sup> Young African American Moravians at St. Philips formed a society as well, but were barred from joining the Moravian denominational union because of the Southern Province's policy of racial segregation. The St. Philips society adopted the name "Christian Endeavor" and operated independently of the white Moravian congregations. The work of the St. Philips society is documented in the diary of James F. McCuiston, transcription located in the Archives of the Moravian Church, Southern Province.

<sup>253</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 16, June 1894, 1.

<sup>254</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 15, May 1894, 1.

<sup>255</sup> Clark, *World Wide Endeavor*, 530.

<sup>256</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 22, December 1894, 2.

<sup>257</sup> Clark, *Christian Endeavor Manual*, 214.

interdenominational union. In April 1895, 119 representatives from 50 societies and four denominations met at the first annual North Carolina convention in Winston-Salem. The convention elected E.S. Crosland, pastor of the Bethania and Kernersville congregations, as the first president of the North Carolina Christian Endeavor Union.<sup>258</sup>

Moravians took a leading role in the statewide union with one of their own clergymen as president and as hosts of the first convention. The timing was critical. The denominational successes enjoyed in the 1890s provided Southern Moravianism with the manpower, resources, and morale necessary to assume the role. Moreover, the recognition of Moravian leadership in North Carolina Protestant circles served as a confirmation of the body of Christ, offering legitimacy for the denomination as a leader in the Southern evangelical field.<sup>259</sup>

The mature Southern Moravian church of the 1890s supported participation in Christian Endeavor because it did not threaten the denominational identity the church had constructed in the postbellum period. A.D. Thaeler, assistant pastor of Salem Congregation, and the North Carolina Union's first superintendent, observed that while Christian Endeavor was interdenominational, it "does not allow us to lose sight of the truest loyalty to our own Church affiliations."<sup>260</sup> The movement hearkened back to the Moravians' ecumenical roots based in heart religion but did not betray its newfound sectarian spirit. Like their Protestant rivals, Southern Moravians preached denominational loyalty to the young adults they ministered to in their Christian Endeavor societies. Christian Endeavor built on the training Moravian youths received in the denomination's Sunday schools. It provided leadership experience for a new

---

<sup>258</sup> Clark, *World Wide Endeavor*, 530; *Daily Texts*, 1895, 179.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 25, March 1895, 3.

generation of Moravian clergy and laity who bore the standard of Southern Moravianism in the twentieth century.

## CONCLUSION

### A CHURCH APART

On November 17, 1903, the Southern Province observed its sesquicentennial anniversary with a commemorative worship service at Bethabara. Several thousand members attended, traveling in some cases, more than thirty miles by horse and buggy to celebrate the founding of their denomination. Southern Moravians young and old, rich and poor, black and white, packed into the fields around Bethabara's *Gemeinhaus* in their Sunday best to sing hymns of thanksgiving and listen to accounts of life in colonial Wachovia. The service celebrated the history of the Southern Province and served as a poignant reminder to those in attendance that their modern religion bore little semblance to that of their theocratic forerunners. Others inspired by the occasion, looked to the day when the Moravian Church would achieve numeric and religious prominence among her sister churches in the Southern United States. Bernard Pfohl of Salem Congregation waxed poetic about his denomination's future: "Whatever memorial may be placed at Bethabara," he wrote in the *Wachovia Moravian*, "let us not look upon it simply as a memorial for the past, but let us regard it with even deeper significance—the cornerstone of a new structure of endeavor and influence for our beloved church."<sup>261</sup>

Moravians actively assimilated themselves into the religious mainstream of Southern American society after the Civil War, in part because they began to feel like strangers in their own backyard. For more 100 years, the Moravian Church dominated religious affairs in the Forsyth County region. The 1850s brought dramatic growth to the Methodists and Baptists in the North Carolina Piedmont, momentum on which they continued to build in the postwar period. The increases the Methodists and Baptists enjoyed came from the worship experiences they

---

<sup>261</sup> *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 122, April 1903, 1; "Bethabara Day," *Wachovia Moravian*, no. 129, November 1903, 1; Bower, 81.

offered to potential converts. The revival was chief among the evangelical tools in their religious arsenal. Moravians originally avoided or explicitly forbade revivals because of their traditional liturgical, high church mentality. However, by 1865 it was clear to Moravian leaders that their denomination was losing ground and would have to modify its position on revivals lest it completely alienate the rural laity and black Moravians attending St. Philips church in Salem. Once the church began to permit and even encourage revivals, it reaped the rewards of increased membership and spiritual renewal.

As the North Carolina Piedmont transitioned from farming to industry after Reconstruction, a massive influx of labor swelled Salem and Winston, Salem's contiguous neighbor to the north. Even though they worked in mills and factories owned by members of Salem congregation, the new residents of Winston and Salem were uninterested in Moravian Church. Instead they joined local Methodist and Baptist congregations. To attract these mill workers, the Moravian denomination again turned to revivals, though this time, in its city churches. White urban Moravian congregations had a longstanding liturgical worship tradition, and so compromised reservations about the rowdiness of revivals by holding more restrained protracted meetings. Revivalism relaxed the Southern Province's high-church mentality—a shift that stood in stark contrast to the more conservative Moravianism of the Northern Province.

The pace of change for Southern Moravians accelerated after a contentious and failed merger with the Northern Province (1881-1884). When the Southern Moravians realized that they could no longer look to their Northern Brethren for support, they were faced with the daunting task of rebuilding their province from within. The Southern Province turned to a proven and popular method of Christian education among the South's largest and most influential Protestant denominations—the Sunday school. Southern Moravians, long-time supporters of the

Union Sunday schools for children's Christian education, turned away from that ecumenical model and reinvented their Sunday school program as a sectarian one. They used Sunday schools to buttress their existing congregations and found new ones. Provincial leaders placed the program's administration in the hands of the Provincial Sunday School Committee, chaired by a layman, James Lineback. It had the desired effect. Between 1885 and 1900 Southern Moravians increased their numbers nearly 150 percent.<sup>262</sup> A denominational approach to Sunday schools proved to be another difference between Southern and Northern Moravians, for the latter supported decentralized Union schools well into the twentieth century.

The Moravians' heart religion was an important reason for their ongoing commitment to ecumenism, a commitment that lasted far longer than that of other Protestant denominations in the South. The tension between their historic acceptance and cooperation with all Christian faiths and defining themselves as a sectarian denomination challenged the very foundation of their heart religion—that salvation was universal, irrespective of dogma or creed. The change was wrenching, but the Moravian denomination continued to study what it meant to “be church” in the Southern United States and used the successful Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian synods around them as models.

In the final decade of the nineteenth century, Moravians built on the momentum that revivals and Sunday schools provided by honing their image and messages to their constituents and potential converts. In the 1890s, the Southern Moravians founded their own regional denominational newspaper, the *Wachovia Moravian*, to supersede the Northern Province's own *Moravian*. In addition, the Southern Province published a host of books, pamphlets, and worship materials designed to reinforce the sectarian differences between themselves and the churches around them, whom they now perceived as competitors.

---

<sup>262</sup> *Daily Texts, 1887*, 173; *Daily Texts, 1902*, 196-197.



With a new sense of denominational significance and an impetus for extension, Moravians began to emulate the worship architecture favored by other Southern denominations. Rather than continue to worship in the outdated European churches built by their forerunners, the Moravians of the mature Southern church elected to build worship houses in the Gothic Revival style in both rural and urban areas. This was a physical manifestation of a decision to assimilate into the mainstream of Southern Protestantism. Emboldened by their success, Moravians announced their arrival as a mainline Southern Protestant church by taking the lead in the Christian Endeavor movement as it swept through North Carolina in the mid 1890s.

The role played by the laity in the maturation of the Southern Moravian Church between 1865 and 1903 cannot be overstated. As the numerical growth of the province outpaced the available salaried clergy in the South, Moravians increasingly turned to lay leadership. The interaction between lay and clergy had a significant impact on the high-church, liturgical tradition within the Moravian Church, with the result that it became much more like the Southern Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian denominations, all of whom depended on strong lay leadership. Lay leadership in the Southern Moravian Church began with calls from rural communicants for revival services. Southern Moravian clergy who were uneasy with revivalism's rowdiness and non-liturgical worship were forced to modify their position on the subject. Numerical growth and egalitarianism whittled away high-church practices and led to the appointment of lay ministers to preach the Gospel to Southern flocks.

Lay participation prompted Southern Moravians to embrace outreach efforts that parishioners could administer effectively such as denominational Sunday schools and Christian Endeavor. The culmination of lay ascendancy in the Southern Province came in 1899, when the laity solidified their increasingly important role in denominational decision-making by earning a

permanent spot on the PEC.<sup>263</sup> Prior to 1899, only clergy served in this capacity. The growth of lay power in relation to clerical power was unique to the Southern Moravian Church in nineteenth century North America. Moravians in the North appreciated and understood the impact of lay work on the growth of the Southern Province, but did not follow their lead. Northern Moravians waited until the 1930s to elect a layperson to their PEC.<sup>264</sup>

An examination of Southern Moravians after the Civil War offers insight into the nature of ethnicity and its effect on denominational identity. Surprisingly, only one historian has suggested that social and religious change occurred independently of one another in Wachovia. In his book *The Moravian Community*, Daniel B. Thorp contends Moravians in Salem preserved their ethnic identity not by isolating themselves, but by interacting with their neighbors through “peaceful, regulated contact across clearly defined cultural boundaries.”<sup>265</sup> Moravians participated in the legal, political, and economic systems of colonial and antebellum North Carolina as long as the participation did not threaten their religious status quo. Thus, they maintained a level of religious hegemony while simultaneously integrating themselves into Southern society.

This study supports Thorp’s thesis, and suggests that this model was relevant throughout Southern Moravian society, not just in congregation towns. One hundred years of political and economic interaction with “outsiders” meant that at the close of the antebellum era, Wachovia Moravians were socially and politically identical to their Southern neighbors. Moravians lived and worked alongside people of other faiths, owned slaves, supported secession, and raised

---

<sup>263</sup> PEC Minutes, December 21, 1899, B 61:3 Provincial Elders Conference Minutes Books 1879-1895, Moravian Archives, Southern Province.

<sup>264</sup> Hamilton, 421-422; For a Northern Moravian appraisal of lay activity in the Southern Province, see the *Moravian*, vol. 32, no. 44, October 1887, 696.

<sup>265</sup> Thorp, 3-7.

Confederate regiments to fight in the Civil War. Still, their religion seemed foreign and for the majority of the nineteenth century, Moravians did not actively pursue new members in the Southern United States because of a misguided belief that their brand of Christianity was appealing exclusively to German immigrants and their descendants. They felt that members of other ethnic groups understood the Moravian Church to be a Germanic sect. The fact that Southern Moravians did not question this characterization—even in the post-war era when Moravians no longer shared the German ethnicity of many of their founding members—suggests that at some level, they themselves believed the characterization to be true.

Historian John Higham argues that a collective perception of distinctiveness is as important in defining a group's ethnicity as the cultural bellwethers traditionally used by historians to judge it. It would be instructive for future studies to explore the impact of such a collective perception of distinctiveness on other religious or social groups. It is important to note that in the 1880s and 1890s, when the Southern Province began to proselytize aggressively among ethnic groups that made up the largest mainline Southern Protestant denominations in their area—English Methodists and Baptists and Scots-Irish Presbyterians—the characterization of Moravianism as an ethnically German sect waned.<sup>266</sup>

The acculturation and maturation of the Southern Moravian Province followed a unique course, which challenges assumptions that underlie our understanding of the Southern Protestant experience. Scholars of Southern religious history have long held a view of religious homogeneity when studying the development of Protestantism in the American South. While all of the major Protestant denominations suffered schisms, established denominational Sunday schools, displayed a penchant for revivalism, and contributed to the rise of sectarian competition,

there were, however, religious groups like the Moravians, whose version of Southern Protestantism was not the result of war or the question of slavery. Although they followed an alternate route than their Southern Protestant brethren, Southern Moravians also endured a religious schism, founded denominational Sunday schools, experienced revivals, and fashioned a sectarian identity. In the end, the result for Southern Moravianism was the same as that of its Protestant neighbors—a brand of evangelical Protestant Christianity in which region and religion were inexorably linked.

---

<sup>266</sup> John Higham, "Ethnicity and American Protestants: Collective Identity in the Mainstream," in *New Directions in American Religious History*, ed. Harry S. Stout and D.G. Hart (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 243-244.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### MANUSCRIPTS

#### Winston-Salem, North Carolina

##### Moravian Archives, Southern Province

Minutes of the Provincial Synods, Moravian Church, South  
Minutes of the Provincial Elders Conferences, Moravian Church, South  
Minutes of the Provincial District Conferences, Moravian Church, South  
Minutes and Correspondence of the Southern Province Union Committee  
Provincial Financial Records, Pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century, Moravian Church, South  
Diary of Edward Rondthaler  
Diary of John F. McCuiston

#### Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

##### Moravian Archives, Northern Province

Minutes of the Provincial Board of Christian Education, Moravian Church, North  
West Side Sunday School Collection  
South Bethlehem Congregation Collection  
Records of the Young Men's Missionary Society of Bethlehem

#### Washington, DC

United States Census Bureau  
Decennial Census, 1870 - 1900

### NEWSPAPERS

*New York Times*

*Moravian*

*People's Press* (Salem, NC)

*Wachovia Moravian*

*The Winston Leader* (Winston-Salem, NC)

### BOOKS

Atwood, Craig D. *Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem*. University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2004.

Blumenson, John J. G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982.

Boles, John B. *The Great Revival 1787-1805: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*. Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1972.

- Bower, Jennifer Bean. *Images of America: Moravians in North Carolina*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006.
- Boylan, Anne. *Sunday School: The Formation of An American Institution*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988.
- Brabham, William Mouzon. *A History of Sunday School Work in the North Carolina Conference Methodist Episcopal Church, South*. Greensboro: North Carolina Christian Advocate, 1925.
- Bratt, James D., ed. *Antirevivalism in Antebellum America: A Collection of Religious Voices*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006.
- Brown, Candy Gunther. *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing and Reading in America, 1789-1880*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Brown, Marianna C. *Sunday School Movements in America*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1901.
- Chapman, Sarah Bahnson, ed. *Bright and Gloomy Days: The Civil War Correspondence of Captain Charles Frederic Bahnson, A Moravian Confederate*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003.
- The Church Book of the Southern District of the American Province of the Moravian Church.* Salem, NC: Crist and Keehln Printers, 1898.
- Clark, Francis Edward. *World Wide Endeavor: The Story of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor*. Philadelphia: Gillespie, Metzger, and Kelley, 1895.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Christian Endeavor Manual*. Boston: United Society of Christian Endeavor, 1903.
- Carwardine, Richard J. *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997.
- Crews, C. Daniel and Richard W. Starbuck. *With Courage For the Future: The Story of the Moravian Church, Southern Province*. Winston-Salem, NC: Moravian Church Southern Province, 2002
- Crews, C. Daniel, and Lisa D. Bailey, eds. *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*. 2 vols. Raleigh: Office of Archives and History, NC Department of Cultural Resources, 2000-2006.
- Daily Texts*. Bethlehem, PA: Office of Moravian Publications, 1877-1910.

- Fries, Adelaide, ed. *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*. 10 vols. Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1922-1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Moravian Church: Yesterday and Today*. Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1926.
- Fries, Adelaide, Stuart Thurman Wright, and J. Edwin Hendricks. *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976.
- The Fourth Report of the American Sunday School Union*. Philadelphia: Ashmead and Company, 1828.
- Goen, C.C. *Broken Churches, Broken Nation: Denominational Schisms and the Coming of the Civil War*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985.
- Gollin, Gillian Lindt. *Moravians in Two Worlds: A Study of Changing Communities*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967
- Hall, Jacqueline Dowd, Robert Korstad, James Leloudis, Christopher B. Daly, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Michael H. Frisch. *Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Hamilton, J. Taylor and Kenneth G. Hamilton. *History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum, 1722-1957*. Winston-Salem, NC: Interprovincial Board of Christian Education Moravian Church in America, 1967.
- Hill, Samuel S. *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999.
- Kilde, Jeanne Halgren. *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Lynn, Robert W., and Elliott Wright. *The Big Little School: Sunday Child of American Protestantism*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971.
- Mathews, Donald G. *Religion in the Old South*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- McMillen, Sally. *To Raise Up The South: Sunday Schools In Black And White Churches*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001.
- Mead, Sidney. *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1963.
- Mulder, Philip. *A Controversial Spirit: Evangelical Awakenings in the South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

- Murtagh, William J. *Moravian Architecture and Town Planning*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967.
- Packard, Robert T. and Balthazar Korab, *Encyclopedia of American Architecture*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1995.
- Rankin, Richard. *Ambivalent Churchmen and Evangelical Churchwomen: The Religion of the Episcopal Elite in North Carolina, 1880-1860*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993.
- Rohrer, S. Scott. *Hope's Promise: Religion and Acculturation in the Southern Backcountry*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005.
- Rondthaler, Edward. *The Memorabilia of Fifty Years, 1877-1927*. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1928.
- Sensbach, Jon F. *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763-1840*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- The Shorter Moravian Hymn Book*. Winston-Salem, NC: Winston Printing Company, 1920.
- Shirley, Michael. *From Congregation Town to Industrial City: Culture and Social Change in a Southern Community*. New York: New York University Press, 1994
- Snay, Mitchell. *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993.
- Sommer, Elisabeth W. *Serving Two Masters: Moravian Brethren in Germany and North Carolina, 1727-1801*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000.
- Stocker, Harry Emilius. *A Home Mission History of the Moravian Church in the United States and Canada*. Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church Publication Committee, 1924.
- Stowell, Daniel. *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Surrat, Jerry. *Gottlieb Schober of Salem: Discipleship and Ecumenical Vision in an Early Moravian Town*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983.
- Thorp, Daniel B. *The Moravian Community in Colonial North Carolina: Pluralism on the Southern Frontier*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989.
- Williams, Peter W. *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000.



## ARTICLES

- Atwood, Craig D. "Zinzendorf's 1749 Reprimand to the *Brüdergemeine*." *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* vol. 29, (1996): 59-84.
- Higham, John. "Ethnicity and American Protestants: Collective Identity in the Mainstream." In *New Directions in American Religious History*, edited by Harry S. Stout and D.G. Hart. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Mathews, Donald G. "Religion in the South: Authenticity and Purity—Pulling Us Together, Tearing Us Apart." in *Religious Diversity and American Religious History: Studies in Traditions and Cultures*, edited by Walter H. Conser Jr. and Sumner B. Twiss. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Second Great Awakening as An Organizing Process, 1780-1830: An Hypothesis," *American Quarterly* 21 (Spring 1969): 23-43.
- Pickett, Terry H. "Secularization of a Theocracy: The Moravians in North Carolina." *Tamkang Journal of American Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, (Fall 1987): 7-24.
- Schattschneider, David. "The Roots of the Contemporary Moravian Church in North America." *The Hinge*, vol. 14, no. 1, (Winter 2007): 31-52.
- Scott, Donald. "Evangelicalism, Revivalism, and the Second Great Awakening." National Humanities Center.  
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/nevanrev.htm>.
- Shantz, Douglas H. "A Church Ahead of its Time: The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Moravian Community on Gender, Worship and Ecumenism." *The Hinge*, vol. 12, no.1, (Spring 2005): 2-18.
- Surratt, Jerry Lee. "The Role of Dissent in Community Evolution Among Moravians in Salem, 1722-1860." *North Carolina Historical Review* 52 (July 1975): 235-255.
- Weber, Christian D. "A Review of Church Extension in the Moravian Church, Southern Province, 1753-1995." *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* vol. 29, (1996): 103-124.

## UNPUBLISHED SOURCES, DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

- Druckenmiller, Marlane. "Linking Church School with Corporate Worship." MA th., Moravian Theological Seminary, 1990.
- Hendricks, Wanda. "St. Philips Moravian Church of Salem, NC: Its Past and Future," MA th., Wake Forest University, 1984.

Rohrer, S. Scott. "Freedman of the Lord: The Black Moravian Congregation of Salem, N.C., and its Struggle for Survival, 1856-1890," Sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of St. Philip's Churches, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Mission Among the People: The World of St. Philips Church From 1890 to 1952," Sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of St. Philip's Church, 1993.

Smith, June Todd. "Bethabara Church and *Gemeinhaus*: Architectural Forms and Moravian Theology," MA th., The University of North Carolina, 1973.

Surrat, Jerry Lee. "From Theocracy to Voluntary Church and Secularized Community: A Study of the Moravians in Salem, North Carolina, 1772-1860." PhD diss., Emory University, 1968.

## APPENDIX: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Since its founding in 1753, the Southern Moravian Church has required its ministers to keep diaries of daily events in the congregations and communities they served. Moravian leaders kept detailed minutes of synods, district conferences, and committee meetings as well. In so doing, the Wachovia brethren created one of North America's largest and most complete collections of historical documents relating to colonial life in the Southern backcountry. The historical records until the late antebellum period are primarily in German, though a substantial amount has been translated into English. Because primary source materials for the colonial era are rare and frequently incomplete, the Moravian collection has garnered attention from historians and scholars. The postbellum collection in the Moravian Archives is also extensive, but has not been mined to the same extent. The Southern Province depository is located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Benjamin Antes Peterson was born in Willingboro, New Jersey, in 1980 and he spent most of his youth and adolescence in North Carolina after his father, Robert, accepted a call to serve as pastor of First Moravian Church in Greensboro. After graduating from Grimsley High School in 1998, Benjamin earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Elon University in 2002. That same year, he entered the graduate program for public history at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Benjamin is currently employed by BB&T and resides in McLeansville, North Carolina, with his wife, Elizabeth, and daughter, Anna Katherine.