CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

By
Adelaide L. Fries
Customs and Practices
of
The Moravian Church

ADELAIDE L. FRIES

Revised Edition 1973

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND EVANGELISM
500 S. Church Street
Winston-Salem, N. C.
Topical Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. A PIONEER CHURCH</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Bearer of Protestantism</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of the Moravian Church</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ministry of the Moravian Church</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravian Archives</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seal of the Moravian Church</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneers in Education</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary Societies</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravian Missions</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. A LITURGICAL CHURCH</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgies</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Litany</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptism</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lord's Supper</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Surplice</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. THE CHURCH YEAR</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Church Year</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advent</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Star</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Eve</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Candles</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Putz</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epiphany</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lent</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion Week</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion Week Manual</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God's Acre</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascension Day</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitsunday</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Sunday</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### IV. A CHURCH FAMILY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Choir System</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravian Dress</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funerals</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brotherly Agreement</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cup of Covenant</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Schools</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V. A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May Twelfth</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August Thirteenth</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September Sixteenth</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November Thirteenth</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lovefeasts</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odes</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Year's Eve</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Texts</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

To the First Edition — 1949

Dr. Adelaide L. Fries is the archivist of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America. She has written this book at the request of the widely distributed "Know Your Church" publications undertaken by the Board.

Dr. Fries was born in Winston-Salem in a Moravian family which traces its ancestry back to Zinzendorf, the father of the renewed church. Early in life she displayed an interest in historical matters. She was educated at Salem Academy and College, undertook research in the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Herrnhut, Germany, and for many years has studied appreciatively in the Archives of the Southern Province. Three honorary degrees, in each case the degree being Doctor of Letters, have been bestowed upon her by Moravian College, Wake Forest, and the University of North Carolina in recognition of her efforts. Her usefulness as a historian is evidenced by her popularity as a speaker and writer. Among her works are, "Records of the Moravians in North Carolina," and the popular "Road to Salem." She is the co-author of the centennial history, "Forsyth, A County on the March."

All points of this present volume have been carefully checked in the historical records of our church and with many informed persons. It is our hope that this book may serve as a source of information and interest on matters pertaining to the customs and practices of our beloved church.

Preface

To the Second Edition — 1962

The enthusiastic reception given Customs and Practices of the Moravian Church has merited a republication of Dr. Adelaide L. Fries' book.

This edition, prepared by the Commission on Publications of the Southern Province's Board of Christian Education and Evangelism, is presented with revisions which include recent developments in the organizational structure of the Church enacted by the General Synod of 1957.
Dr. Fries’ death, in 1949, concluded a life of devoted service to her church. This volume is offered as a tribute to her life-long interest in the Moravian heritage and the valuable contribution her influence continues to make toward a deeper appreciation of the church’s life and witness.

THE COMMISSION ON PUBLICATIONS
THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
AND EVANGELISM, SOUTH

Raymond E. Ebert                  R. Gordon Spaugh
George G. Higgins                  Edwin L. Stockton
Burton J. Rights                  F. Herbert Weber

Preface
To the Third Edition — 1973

This is a book about “containers” — the containers of the faith of the early Moravian Church. It is about the customs and practices which contained their love for the living Christ.

If we are interested only in the containers and ignore the contents, we will be caught “holding the bag,” an empty bag. Revering the containers can be a kind of idolatry, too. It is the contents that are important.

As you read about the containers, look for the contents. Be aware of these people’s experiences with God the Father and the Holy Spirit and with Jesus, their Elder Brother and Saviour. Be also aware of their experiences with one another and in serving their Master.

After reading this book, give some thought and effort to your church forming some new customs and practices to contain your experiences of the love of Jesus for you and your love for Him. Ask the living Christ to lead you into new fields of service for Him.

Your own faith and love for the living Christ will produce new containers, and there will be new customs and practices in the Moravian Church.

This edition has been given a new cover and some corrections were made by the Committee: the brethren F. Herbert Weber, C. Bruce Weber, Bill Glance, Robert Iobst, William McElveen and the sisters Patricia Johnson and Lucille Newman (cover design). Brother George Higgins also gave much help.
CHAPTER I

A Pioneer Church

History assigns to the Moravian Church the position of Standard Bearer of Protestantism. With the exception of certain pre-Reformation groups that were not really classified as churches, it is in point of time the oldest of the Protestant churches.

The records show that those who composed its first membership were the forerunners of the movement known as the Reformation. They were followers of the great pre-Reformation preacher, educator, and martyr, John Hus of Bohemia, who was burned at the stake in Constance, Germany, in 1415, one hundred and two years before Martin Luther began the movement in Germany which developed into the Reformation, and which also produced Erasmus and Calvin to carry the Reformation into other parts of Europe.

John Hus was executed because he refused to give up his belief that the doctrines set forth in the Bible should be followed by Christians. His view that the authority of the Scriptures took precedence over the authority of the Church brought him into conflict with the Roman Catholic Church of his day.

But though the church and civil rulers of that day killed Hus they could not destroy his teachings. He had been a much beloved preacher, and there were many who remembered what he had said and what he had written. For sixteen years his followers through what are known as the Hussite Wars tried to establish his doctrines by force of arms, but they gained only one point, the right to give the Cup to the congregation in the Holy Communion.

When the Hussite Wars ended, men began to ask themselves whether there might not be a better way to carry out their purpose. A group withdrew from Prague to the estate of Lititz, on the border of Bohemia, where they planned to live Christian lives according to the Bible, as Hus had explained it. That was in 1457. Ten years later they found it necessary to establish their own independent ministry. So the Unitas Fratrum, the Unity of Brethren, was firmly established sixty years before the Protestant Reformation began.

The Pioneer Church of Christian Missions is another designation which is generally accorded to the Moravian Church. The beginning of Moravian missions was in 1732, which is sixty years before the
mission movement started in England under William Cary, and seventy-eight years before the organization of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Before 1732 there had been a few brave men of other churches who had attempted to go to the heathen, but the Moravians were the first Protestants to undertake missions as a church enterprise.

While not the first Protestant church to come to America, the Moravian Church came in colonial days. There was a temporary settlement in Georgia from 1735 to 1740, and permanent settlements began in Pennsylvania in 1740 and in North Carolina in 1753.

In 1749 the Parliament of Great Britain gave formal recognition to the Moravian Church as an "ancient, protestant, episcopal church." This act of Parliament made permanent the name of the renewed Unitas Fratrum as "the Moravian Church," a name already current at some places because in 1722 men, women, and children, descendants of the ancient Unitas Fratrum, came from the province of Moravia into what is now Saxony, seeking religious liberty.

Men born in Moravia were detained for many weeks in London on their way to Georgia in 1735. The numerous documents presented to Parliament in 1749 showed the origin of the Unitas Fratrum in Bohemia, its spread into neighboring Moravia, and its reestablishment in Herrnhut, Germany, by emigrants from Moravia. They also proved that, through the church represented by these emigrants, the Moravian Church had an authentic line of bishops, secured in 1467, giving them the "Apostolic Succession."

The name "Moravian Church" soon ceased to have any national significance, for the Unitas Fratrum grew rapidly by the accession of members from many of the European states and from other denominations. Comparatively few of the settlers in Moravian centers in America were born in Moravia, or were descended from men born in Moravia, but they had inherited the history of the church and the name was so generally and so appropriately used that it has been accepted as one of the legal names of the church along with the earlier, Unitas Fratrum, and its English translation, Unity of Brethren.

Strictly speaking, therefore, the name Moravian Church emphasizes its position among the churches as a pioneer church, a protestant church, an episcopal church, and a church of recognized standing in
A PIONEER CHURCH

America from colonial days unto this present. The name *Unitas Fratrum* stresses the doctrine of Christian brotherhood under Jesus Christ, regardless of the race or the denomination from which a member has come.

Today the Moravian Church consists of seventeen provinces that are found in many areas of the world and among many races. As the Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum states, “Some are found in highly industrialized communities; others are in developing regions of the earth. As a consequence, the Provinces of the Unity offer a wide variety of economic, social and political development.”

Because of this divergence some of the younger Provinces, as the constitution continues, “must of necessity look to other Provinces or to the Unity as a whole for assistance in manpower and money and for encouragement and advice. Such Provinces are considered to be in affiliation with the supporting Province. This support is given and received in a spirit of mutual love and concern and is an essential feature of the brotherhood of the Unitas Fratrum.” (Paragraph 201)

In regard to the denominational lines it may be noted that in 1741 Henry Antes, a member of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, and Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, a bishop of the Moravian Church, tried to develop friendship and cooperation among the numerous denominations in Pennsylvania. The attempt failed because of jealousies and misunderstandings, but today various efforts are being made to secure the cooperation among Christian churches which failed two hundred years ago.

In the minutes of a Synodical Conference held in England in 1750 there is an interesting statement of the relation of the Moravian Church to other churches of that day. For instance, a kindly feeling toward the Eastern Orthodox Church was advised “because it brought us the Gospel,” when the Greek priests, Cyril and Methodius, went as missionaries to heathen Moravia in A.D. 863. Of the Roman Church “we must not speak ill,” because “we were once of their household,” although “they have bidden us farewell.” “The English Church has stood by us as long as it existed. They think we can help them and all Christendom.” “We have particular connections with the Lutherans, many of whom have joined the Unity.”
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

Today the Moravian Church occupies a middle position between those churches which insist on the Apostolic Succession for the consecration of their bishops and those newer denominations which have established their own forms of ordination. Bishop Edward Rondthaler summed up the present position of the Moravian Church among the churches in the following sentences:

"Because of formal recognition of our Episcopate by act of the British Parliament in 1749, the Episcopal Church has fraternized with us for nearly two centuries and has welcomed our bishops to her pulpits.

"Calvin and his fellow reformers at Geneva were warm friends of the Unity, and the synodical character of our Church has, among Presbyterians, confirmed this old attachment.

"With Luther our forefathers were in friendly correspondence, and learned much from him, and we have always declared our substantial agreement with the Confession of Augsburg.

"With the Methodists we have the tender tie of the conversion of the Wesleys through their converse with Boehler, Spangenberg, and others. Thus we are united in the special emphasis which we and they are accustomed to lay on the experience of the forgiveness of sins through faith in our sin-atoning Saviour.

"And although we baptize infants, and administer baptism by sprinkling or pouring, yet our kindly appreciation of the Baptist position, and that close adherence to the Scriptures which we prize in common with them, has been the occasion of much fellowship between us."

Government of The Moravian Church

From the beginning the Moravian Church was led by men of vision, men with ideals and ideas far in advance of their own era.

In 1457 there was no democratic government in church or state. Priests and potentates ruled their people with an iron hand. In spite of this custom the followers of Hus who gathered in the little village of Kunvald on the estate of Lititz in Bohemia organized on strictly democratic principles. Members elected the elders, and such other boards and officials as were needed for the supervision of their congregation and village. Women as well as men were chosen for office.
A PIONEER CHURCH

As the movement spread and other congregations were organized, contact was maintained through conferences and through synods to which the congregations sent elected delegates. They sought to make effective the words of Jesus: *One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren* (Matt. 23:8).

All important matters came up for consideration by these synods. They adopted rules and regulations; they formulated doctrines; they outlined policies in times of peace and in times of persecution. A synod decided that an independent ministry had become necessary; a synod elected the men who should receive ordination as the first priests and bishops from among the “Brethren.” Throughout the period of the ancient Unitas Fratrum (1457 to 1621), the synod was the supreme authority among the congregations of the Brethren, which gradually spread from Bohemia into the adjacent countries of Moravia and Poland.

In the anti-reformation which followed the death of Martin Luther the protestant cause in Germany was saved by Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, but the army which the Unitas Fratrum, the Reformed, and the Lutheran Churches put into the field in Bohemia and Moravia was utterly defeated by the Catholic forces. Thousands of the best citizens of those countries were driven into exile and after a time formal organization ceased in the Unity of Brethren.

When the emigrants from Moravia re-organized the Unitas Fratrum in Herrnhut, Saxony, they retained the forms which had been so effective earlier. Again men and women were elected to office by vote of the members; boards and committees served under rules and regulations which the members adopted. Again synods took a leading place in the church polity.

The same is true in America today. Each Moravian congregation holds an annual Congregation Council, in which members of the congregation elect officers and boards and transact such other business as may be necessary.

For convenience in administration the Northern Province in America has established districts in the east and the west and the district conferences send delegates to the provincial synod.

Provincial synods are held at intervals established by the rules of each province, and in those synods lay and ministerial delegates vote
 CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

for the persons who are to serve on the provincial boards until
the next provincial synod, and transact other necessary business.

Delegates from the provinces meet in a Unity Synod scheduled
since 1967 to be held at intervals of every seven years. During the
eighteenth century the General Synod (as it was then known) had
authority over many interests of the individual provinces. During the
nineteenth century the provinces were independent; but General
Synod still had executive control over the missions of the Moravian
Church, which between synods were managed by an interprovincial
committee sitting in Herrnhut. After the first World War it was
necessary to reorganize the mission work and to commit the various
mission fields to individual provinces for supervision. To Unity Synod
is left the important task of maintaining supervision of the doctrines
of the Moravian Church and of furthering its worldwide brotherhood.

By action of the Unity Synod of 1967 the affairs of the Unitas
Fratrum are managed between synods by a Unity Board which consists
of one member from each province “governed by a Synod.” The Unity
Board normally carries on its business by correspondence but may meet
in emergencies.

One of its duties is to call the Unity Synod and “decide on the
place and date of convening.”

The Ministry of The Moravian Church

When the group of followers of John Hus gathered in the village
of Kunvald in Bohemia in 1457, they had no intention of separating
themselves from the established church. They thought that it would
be possible for them to live quiet, simple, Christian lives, served by
priests of the Catholic or of the Utraquist Church who were in symp-
athy with their purpose. For many years the Waldenses, followers of
Peter Waldo, of France, had been such a group within the Catholic
Church, so the plan of the Hussites seemed plausible enough.

The entirely unexpected growth in numbers, however, brought
persecution upon the Brethren of Kunvald, and not enough priests
were available to serve them all. This finally forced them to consider
the question of establishing their own order of the ministry.

At that time no ordination was considered valid unless it was re-
ceived at the hands of a bishop who was in the so-called Apostolic
A PIONEER CHURCH

Succession, that is in a direct line of succession from the Apostles. The question was where to find a bishop who would be able and willing to give them this type of consecration, and so place the ordination of their ministers beyond the criticism of their enemies. Such a man they found in Bishop Stephen, then associated with a Waldensian group, and to him they sent three priests who were willing to accept episcopal consecration from him and pass it on to the Brethren. Bishop Stephen paid a heavy price for his kindness, for the Catholic authorities arrested him and burned him at the stake for daring to give the Apostolic Succession to the Brethren of Kunvald.

The defeat of the Protestant forces in Bohemia in 1621 and the wholesale persecution which followed, threatened the Unitas Fratrum with extinction, but Bishop John Amos Comenius and the other bishops of that day carefully preserved the episcopate, consecrating younger priests so that the succession might be assured in case the Unity was revived.

When such a revival took place in Herrnhut, between the years 1722 and 1727, there were still two bishops of the Unitas Fratrum living. They were Bishop Daniel Jablonsky of Berlin and Bishop Christian Sitkovius of Poland. Bishop Jablonsky, with the approval of Bishop Sitkovius, consecrated David Nitschmann (called the “carpenter” to distinguish him from other men of the same name). Thus the Moravian episcopacy dating from 1467 was continued to the present day.

Moravian bishops hold no executive position by virtue of their office. Their function is primarily to ordain men to the ministry, and a bishop consecrated in one province holds his episcopal standing throughout all the other provinces of the Unity, and for life. Custom recognizes them as “pastors of the pastors.” A Moravian bishop may serve as pastor of a congregation, or election may place him in an executive position. A bishop is elected from among the presbyters of the Moravian Church.

Elevation to the rank of presbyter is recommended by a Provincial Elders’ Conference for a deacon of the Moravian Church, in recognition of faithful and approved service in the ministry. Consecration as a presbyter is given by a bishop. It confers no added privilege to those held as a deacon.
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

Men who have completed a theological course and are considered suitable candidates for the ministry are ordained as deacons by a bishop before being placed in charge of a congregation. Occasionally a layman is ordained provided he has received special training under the direction of the Provincial Elders' Conference and is serving as a full time supply pastor of a congregation.

A deacon in the Moravian Church is considered fully ordained. He may administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, baptize infants or adults, administer the Rite of Confirmation, and perform the marriage ceremony.

A minister transferring from another denomination to the Moravian Church is accepted as a deacon. He can become a presbyter only through consecration by a Moravian bishop.

The Unity Synod of 1967 established the office of Acolytes for lay-servants "who exercise a particular office within their own congregation." His duties are described as "assisting the pastor in pastoral duties" and "assisting in serving the elements of the Holy Communion . . . ."

Acolytes are elected by the Boards of Elders and Trustees of the congregation, but their reception must be authorized by the Provincial Elders' Conference. In the Southern Province, Acolytes or Acolouths are subject to the same retirement rules that apply to Ministers. The office applies only in the congregation making the selection and is not transferable in the event the Acolyte moves from one congregation to another. (Paragraph 691)

Moravian Archives

From the beginning, leaders of the Moravian Church have been men knowing the value of accurate historical records and capable of keeping such records and preserving them.

The earliest archives of the Unitas Fratrum, however, were subjected to unusual accidents. The first collection of documents was destroyed at the end of the fifteenth century; the second perished in a fire in 1546. The great mass of their publications, issued at a later time, fell a prey to the fury of the anti-reformation. Taking into consideration the disasters which befell the records, and the persistent efforts that were made to blot them from existence, it is surprising
A PIONEER CHURCH

that so much is known of the origin, episcopate, and earliest history of the ancient Unitas Fratrum.

The synod of 1459 ordered that "all official letters and other historical documents are to be carefully collected and preserved." Most of this collection escaped the great conflagration which destroyed Lissa, in Poland, in 1656. At that time Lissa was the headquarters of the survivors of the ancient Unitas Fratrum and the residence of Bishop John Amos Comenius. Some of the papers were lost in Berlin, but the rest were taken to Herrnhut after the renewal of the Unitas Fratrum there.

The General Synod of 1764 provided for the continued care of the Archives of the Unity at Herrnhut. The Unity Synod of 1967 reaffirmed that the Archives at Herrnhut are the responsibility of the entire Unity and are to be funded partially by the Moravian Foundation.

In the early days ministers kept daily diaries of which copies were sent to the central boards of the Unity. At the European headquarters a board of secretaries reviewed these diaries and reports from the congregations and from mission fields, and made copies of them. In like manner copies were made of the memoirs, or biographical sketches of members, or accounts of important occurrences in the life of the Church, and of sermons preached by leading Moravian ministers. These copies served as a manuscript Church newspaper sent to subscribers and eagerly read in nearer and more distant parts of the Unity.

In addition local congregations kept the minutes of their church boards, the congregational registers, memoirs and memorabilia. As these were deposited in the Archives of each province, the collection increased in value.

The Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, were the depositories of still another collection of documents of historical significance. These were the copies, many in manuscript form, of musical compositions. Some of this music was written by Moravian musicians; other parts of it were copies of music by European composers. It is this collection that forms the basis of the work at the present time of the Moravian Music Foundation.

Founded in 1956 with its headquarters in Winston-Salem, N. C.,
the Moravian Music Foundation seeks to preserve the approximately 10,000 musical documents dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The Foundation is engaged in the following projects: (1) the cataloging of the music contained in the Moravian Music Archives; (2) the preparation of modern editions of works selected from the Archives; (3) the publication of studies dealing with various aspects of American music history; (4) the encouragement of research in 18th- and 19th-century music by making material available to qualified scholars; (5) the semiannual publication of the Bulletin which contains short articles of interest to historians and musicians; and (6) the issuance of phonograph recordings. That early Moravian music has gained wide acceptance is seen in the fact that since 1956 almost a half million copies of music have been sold. The Foundation prepares music for use in the Early American Moravian Music Festivals which have done much to publicize this music. The place that Moravian Music has won for itself on the American scene became evident when a concert featuring this music was included as a part of the opening festival of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. on September 12, 1971.

Few other churches have Archive collections which in size, scope, and historic importance equal those of the Moravian Church.

Moravian Archive centers during the past century and a half have been Herrnhut, Germany; Bad Boll, Germany; Prague, Czechoslovakia; London, England; Zeist, Holland; Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

To these centers congregations have sent their older records for safe-keeping, and for proper filing, retaining only current records for present use.

During World War II the Archives in Bethlehem and in Salem were not in actual danger. The most important papers in the London Archives were removed from the Fetter Lane repository before it was bombed. Almost by a miracle, the Archive Building in Herrnhut escaped when fire destroyed many of the other buildings in that town at the end of the war.

The Seal of The Moravian Church

The seal of the Moravian Church, first used by bishops, is of
early origin, going back to the Unitas Fratrum of the sixteenth century certainly and probably to the time when the episcopate was secured by the Brethren in the fifteenth century.

The seal was transferred to the bishops of the renewed Unitas Fratrum, or Moravian Church, when David Nitschmann received episcopal consecration from the bishops of the ancient line, Jablonsky and Sitkovius.

In the center of the seal is an Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), which was a favorite symbol in the early Christian church. It is the figure of a lamb holding a staff with a cross at the top. From the staff hangs the banner of victory, and on the banner is another cross. Around the seal there is the inscription, Vicit agnus noster, eum sequamur, “Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow Him.”

**Pioneers In Education**

John Hus, the "Father of the Unitas Fratrum," was a man of comprehensive learning and a Master of Arts from the University of Prague, which in his day, next to the University of Paris, was the most distinguished seat of learning on the continent of Europe. He served as dean of the Philosophical faculty and was twice elected Rector of the University. The value which Hus placed on education has remained a distinguishing characteristic of the Moravian Church.

Gregory, under whom the actual founding of the Unitas Fratrum took place, had received the education given to candidates for the priesthood. He did not consider himself a learned man and probably took little interest in schools.

His successor, Luke of Prague, consecrated a bishop of the Unitas Fratrum in 1500, held the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Prague. During the period in which he shaped the course of the Unitas Fratrum, he gave to its worship more form and dignity than it had under Gregory, and he developed the liturgical part of its service. It was a day in which there was no general system of education, but under the leadership of Bishop Luke the Unitas Fratrum established a school in each of its two hundred congregations and also opened several institutions of higher learning.

When the printing press was invented the Unitas Fratrum bought a press and opened a publication office in Jungbunzlau. Before 1510
sixty printed works had appeared in Bohemia, and of these fifty or more were from the press of the Unity.

John Augusta, who was elected a bishop of the Unity in 1532, did not have a classical education in his youth, but when he decided to become a priest he took up the study of the Latin language and mastered it. He became Bohemia’s most distinguished preacher, earning the title of “the Bohemian Luther.”

The final period of the ancient Unitas Fratrum was marked by the leadership of two barons, by whom the high standard of education was maintained.

Baron von Budowa, of Bohemia, was a man of splendid talents and illustrious learning. He was greatly interested in the University of Prague, which had lost its position of pre-eminence but took on new life about this time. Baron von Budowa met death like a hero of the faith on the Day of Blood in Prague in 1621.

To Baron John von Zerotin, of Moravia, belongs much of the credit for the publication of the Kralitz Bible, which “presented the Bohemian tongue in words more idiomatic, beautiful, and chaste than other books.” For this great work von Zerotin bore all the expense. Young men were sent to the Universities of Wittenberg and Basel for preparation, and when they returned to Bohemia they translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew. The Unitas Fratrum printed this translation in five large volumes. A sixth volume contained the New Testament. The six volumes appeared at intervals from 1579 to 1593.

In the anti-reformation, 1621 to 1628, Protestant churches in Bohemia were closed, congregations were scattered, their members driven into exile and the schools which had given to the Unity so wide-spread a reputation came to an end.

During the hundred years that followed, the educational activities of the Unitas Fratrum centered in one man, Bishop John Amos Comenius. Born March 28, 1592, in Moravia and educated in the schools of the Unity and at the University of Heidelberg, he became active in the Unitas Fratrum and was ordained to the priesthood at the Synod of 1616. The same Synod drew up the Ratio Disciplinæ, a Book of Order, setting forth the constitution, ministry, ritual, and discipline
A PIONEER CHURCH

of the Unitas Fratrum. This book was to play an important part in the reorganization of the Unitas Fratrum more than a century later.

When the persecutions that followed the Day of Blood sent thousands of members of the Unitas Fratrum into exile, Comenius lingered in Bohemia and Moravia, serving those who for one reason or another had remained behind. In 1628 he transferred his residence to Lissa, in Poland, which for some time was a center of the Unitas Fratrum; and there, in 1632, Comenius was consecrated a bishop.

From then on, for the rest of his life, Comenius served not only the Unitas Fratrum but the entire world, earning the title of "the Father of modern education."

Schoolmen of his day found his ideas new, even revolutionary. "Children must learn not only words, but also objects along with the words. Not the memory alone ought to be cultivated, but likewise the reasoning power, the will, the affections. Children should be taught to think clearly and to order their thoughts properly; at the same time an affectionate intercourse with them should be kept up."

Through his correspondence with learned men in various countries, and through the books which he wrote, his ideas were spread, and the entire educational system was affected, especially in Poland, England, Sweden and Holland. There is a tradition that he was invited to go to America as president of Harvard College, recently established, but refused because he had promised to go to Sweden to reorganize its schools.

Of his books only four can be mentioned. The Orbis Pictis, The World in Picture, made the amazing suggestion that pictures in a book increased its educational value.

The Janua Linguarum Reserta, The Gate of Language Unlocked, made his name known throughout Europe, in various parts of Asia, and even in the English colonies of America.

The Informatorium, The School of Infancy, was written for the pre-school child's instruction and is a handbook for Christian mothers. It initiated Comenius' plan "to build a fairer world through education."

He translated the Ratio Disciplinae of 1616 into Latin, so making available this contemporary account of the customs, ritual, and discipline of the ancient Unitas Fratrum. Later, Buddaeus, of the Univer-
sity of Jena, re-translated it into German, and so it came into the hands of Count Zinzendorf when the destiny of the renewed Unitas Fratrum hung in the balance and turned the scales in favor of its reorganization.

Count Zinzendorf, on whose estates the Unitas Fratrum was re-organized, was a man of brilliant mind and wide learning. He was first educated by private tutors; then at the boarding school in Halle, at the University of Wittenberg, and by the customary year of travel which took him as far as Paris. His studies in philosophy, jurisprudence, theology, and the oratorical contests of his day all contributed to his preparation for what was to be his life work. He had a genius for languages, spoke Latin fluently, and into his numerous writings, both prose and poetry, he was accustomed to inject Latin words and phrases, and words from the Greek, English, and French, whenever he thought such words gave a finer shade to the meaning he desired to express.

Naturally such a man would see to it that the children and youth under his care had every educational advantage which it was possible to give them. In Germany and in England schools were begun for girls as well as boys, and many of them continued through the years, rendering efficient service to members and friends.

Foremost among the men who founded the Moravian Church in America stood August Gottlieb Spangenberg, a Master of Arts from the University of Jena, a professor at Halle, and a bishop of the Unitas Fratrum. He had much to do with arrangements during the early years in Pennsylvania, and he saw to it that schools were established there, again for girls as well as for boys.

Indeed, the first school established by Moravians in Pennsylvania was a school for girls. This was begun in Germantown by Benigna von Zinzendorf, in 1742, while she and her father were visiting in America. After she returned to Europe the school was moved to Bethlehem, where it still exists as the Moravian Academy which is the successor of the earlier school. Another school for girls, which has continued until the present, is Linden Hall, begun in 1794, at Lititz, Pennsylvania.

A Theological Seminary was opened at Nazareth, Pennsylvania, in 1807, and after several interruptions it was moved to Bethlehem in
1858, and a college for men was begun. In 1953 the Moravian College for Women was consolidated with Moravian College for Men into a coeducational institution under one administration.

Even into the frontier forests of North Carolina well educated men brought education. In 1772 Salem was only a tiny village. But on its Board of Elders were three men trained in the universities of Europe, the Rev. John Michael Graff and the Rev. Paul Tiersch at Jena, and the Rev. Frederic William Marshall at Leipzig. These men cared so much for education that in 1772 they provided a school for girls and a school for boys, though the children were still of so tender an age that in most places their teaching would have been overlooked. The boys school lasted until efficient city schools were established.

People visiting Salem in the early days, when the education of girls was not attempted elsewhere in the south, begged for years that arrangements might be made whereby their daughters could come to Salem and attend school. Finally, in 1802, their request was granted and plans were made for adding a boarding department to the Salem school. In the course of time the primary grades were dropped, and the school was divided into an Academy, of high school grade, and a College of recognized standard, both flourishing today.

One more pioneer may be mentioned, the Rev. Lewis David de Schweinitz, who was born in Pennsylvania, educated in Europe, and served the Moravian Church in America from 1812 to his death in 1834.

The ministry was the vocation to which his life was dedicated, but botany was his avocation. From childhood he had been interested in fungi, and in 1817 the University of Kiel, Germany, gave him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in absentia, in view of his discoveries in this field of research. He is said to have been the first man born in America to be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy degree. He is also recognized today as "the Father of American Mycology."

**Missionary Societies**

In the early days of Herrnhut foreign missions were considered a project of the Unity as a whole, and no special missionary societies were organized although missionaries were sent into many lands.

In April, 1741, Spangenberg organized in London, England, a
Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel Among the Heathen, which for about twelve years did valuable work in promoting home and foreign missions. This society was revived by its founder in 1776 and became a vital factor in the promotion and management of Moravian missions. It was incorporated in 1921.

The London Association in Aid of Moravian Missions was founded in 1817. Its membership consists largely of non-Moravians, and it contributes annually considerable sums of money in support of Moravian Missions.

In Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a "Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel" was organized in 1745. This was succeeded, in 1787, by the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Heathen," generally spoken of as the S. P. G., which was incorporated in 1788, and became the leading missionary society in the American Moravian Church. Beginning with 1921 it was the "sending society" for missionaries to Alaska, Nicaragua, and to the Indians in California.

Members of the S. P. G. in North Carolina felt that they were too far away to derive much benefit from the Bethlehem society, so in June, 1823, they organized their own "Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel," which ultimately ceased to exist. This was followed by a "Home Mission Society" which for many years sponsored mission work in the Blue Ridge mountains, of which Mt. Bethel and Willow Hill congregations are lasting memorials.

Still later there was a "Young Men's Missionary Society" in Salem, and members of this society, grown to mature years, planned the organization of The Foreign Missionary Society of the Moravian Church, South, which was incorporated in November, 1922. This southern society has made rapid progress in numbers and interest. It is a provincial society, and its annual lovefeast and business session is attended from all over the Southern Province.

In March, 1818, more than fifty women met in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and organized their own missionary society. During the years it bore various names, but ultimately became known as The Woman's Missionary Society. It has had an unbroken existence and is probably the oldest missionary society for women in the United States. It is of interest to note that one of its earliest undertakings was to put in print, for the use of the mission, the Delaware Indian translation of
Lieberkuhn’s “Harmony of the Gospels,” which had been translated into the Delaware language by David Zeisberger, the veteran missionary to the Indians.

A missionary society for home and foreign missions was organized among the women of Salem, North Carolina, in 1822. This Woman’s Missionary Society still exists as one of the missionary organizations of the Home Church.

Many of the Moravian congregations now have their own Missionary Chapters which are associated in the work of The Foreign Missionary Society of the Moravian Church, South.

In 1947 an inter-provincial board, The Board of Foreign Missions of the Moravian Church in America, was organized to assume supervision of all missionary work undertaken by the two American Moravian provinces. It is incorporated under the laws of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is responsible to the Moravian Unity for the provinces of Alaska, Nicaragua, Honduras, Eastern West Indies, and Guyana. By action of the General Synod of 1957 the work among the Indians in California was changed from its status as a mission field to become a part of the developing California district of the Northern Province.

With the creation of this inter-provincial board, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, ceased to be the “sending society” for the Moravian provinces in America. It now, along with The Foreign Missionary Society in the Southern Province, directs its efforts at promoting interest in missions and in providing funds for missions. These funds are turned over annually to be disbursed by The Board of Foreign Missions of the Moravian Church in America.

Moravian Missions

During the days of the ancient Unitas Fratrum there was much home mission activity but nothing along the line of foreign missions. When dates and maps are considered, this was natural. The continent of Europe had been Christianized, at least nominally. So had a strip along the north edge of Africa. Beyond that the map showed a desert and then a blank. East of Arabia was another blank. The Unitas Fratrum was prospering under its second great leader, Bishop Luke of
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

Prague, when Columbus discovered America. The ancient Unitas Fratrum was overthrown one year after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620.

The century which followed was a century of reaction, a century of coldness, of formalism. The Unitas Fratrum existed only in its "Hidden Seed" and in the episcopate so carefully guarded by Bishop John Amos Comenius. Explorers made some progress in opening new lands; adventurers went to America seeking gold; a few colonists made their way to the New World. Occasionally a wandering priest baptized the natives who met the adventurers, but it had no real effect on them.

Finally there was a re-birth of Christian warmth in the so-called Pietistic movement in Germany. Pietism seems not to have thought of foreign missions, but it furnished the atmosphere in which the little Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, received his religious training.

His father died when Zinzendorf was but an infant. When his mother married again and moved with her husband to the court at Berlin, she left the child with his grandmother, Countess von Gersdorf. The Countess was an ardent Pietist, and through her the boy was led into a warm Christian life at an early age.

When he was in the boarding school at Halle he learned of the heathen in far-off lands, and his tender heart was touched by thought of their great need. With three companions of his own age he formed a little club, which they called the "Order of the Mustard Seed." The boys knew that they belonged to the nobility and that when they became of age they would have money and influence, so they covenanted together that when they were old enough they would either take or send the Gospel to the heathen—the tiny mustard seed of desire should become a tree of attainment.

Unlike the majority of such boyish plans this one reached fulfillment. The "Order" continued with their growth, spreading to include notable men of like mind and purpose. Cardinal Noailles, of France, was a member; so was President Reichenbach of Berlin; so was Archbishop Potter of Canterbury, England.

With his remarkable democracy of nature Count Zinzendorf shared his thoughts of the heathen with such men of the one hand,
and with his Moravian tenants on the other. Among the latter he found men who were willing, even eager, to carry the message to the ends of the earth.

In the year 1731 the Count visited the court of Denmark, in Copenhagen, where he was received with great honor. He attended a coronation, and the king himself decorated him with the jewel of the Order of the Dannebrog.

Of more lasting importance was his meeting with two Eskimo men from Greenland and a Negro from the Danish West Indies, from whom he heard much of conditions in those countries. He became aroused anew for foreign missions, wishing to send help to Hans Egede, a Dane, who had been laboring single-handed and without success in Greenland, and to the Negro slaves in the West Indies.

Returning to Herrnhut he told the congregation what he had seen and heard, and immediately volunteers for both fields came forward.

Months of instruction followed, and on August 21, 1732, Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann set out for St. Thomas, in the West Indies.

The Negro, Anton, had warned the congregation of Herrnhut that the missionaries would probably have to sell themselves as slaves in order to reach the slaves of the island. This did not come to pass for the two men secured the needed permission without that tremendous sacrifice. But during the following years, when other missionaries came and the work spread to other islands, many lives were lost because of the climate and a manner of living to which they were not accustomed. Undeterred by this the work continued and today there are strong Moravian congregations on the eight islands of the Eastern West Indies Province.

On January 19, 1733, Matthew Stach and two companions left for Greenland. On their arrival things looked unpromising enough. Stach wrote of it:

> Along the shore were stones,
> And here and there some bones
> But not a man in sight.
> We wandered, brothers three,
> In deep perplexity;
> At midnight dawned the light.
As cold and hard as the stones of their coast seemed the hearts of the Eskimos, but the missionaries persevered and twenty-seven years later, January 6, 1970, Stach was able to baptize their first converts. In the course of time the whole of Greenland became Christianized, and finally the Moravian Church turned over its congregations to the Danish Church, which was in position to care for them. Greenland had become a Danish home mission rather than a foreign mission, so the Moravian Mission Board called its men to other fields.

Equally heroic is the story of Africa. In the latter part of the seventeenth century two missionaries of the Danish-Halle Mission stopped at Cape Town, South Africa, and sent home accounts of the deplorable condition of the natives. For the next forty years occasional, futile attempts were made to arouse interest in Germany. Finally, in 1736, two leaders in the religious life of Holland sent a call to Herrnhut, asking the Moravians to take up the work, and George Schmidt volunteered, although he had recently returned from six years of imprisonment in Bohemia, whither he had gone to preach the Gospel.

On March 11, 1738, Schmidt sailed from Holland and after a voyage of four months he reached Cape Town, desiring "to teach the Hottentots to work and to acquaint them with the Saviour." Unable to speak the language of the natives, he made friends with the first group by joining them after their day's work had ended; and sitting with them on the ground, he gave them tobacco and smoked with them.

Going inland to the Vale of Baboons he persevered until after five years he could baptize the first converts. But this small success infuriated the white settlers, who wanted the Hottentots to remain ignorant slaves, and two years later they forced Schmidt to return to Europe. In 1785 he died while kneeling in prayer, and his friends believed that he died praying for Africa.

Work in South Africa was resumed by the Moravians in 1792. Today there are four Moravian provinces on that continent, South Africa, West, begun in 1737 and renewed in 1792; South Africa, East, started in 1828; Tanzania (Southern Highlands), 1891; and Tanzania (Western), 1897.

Meanwhile Moravian missionaries continued to go to the far ends
A PIONEER CHURCH

of the earth. Some attempts had only temporary results. Of those which became permanent fields mention may be made of Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, on the north coast of South America, begun in 1735; and the adjoining field of Demarara (now known as Guyana), begun in 1738. In connection with the initial effort at foreign missions on the Island of St. Thomas, Moravian missionaries were invited to come to the Island of Jamaica in 1754. Unable to enter the closed land of Tibet, Moravian missionaries settled just across the border in northern India in 1764. Work in Labrador commenced in 1771; in Nicaragua in 1849; in Alaska in 1885 and in Honduras in 1930.

Prior to the First World War these widely scattered mission fields were under the care of an international mission board, sitting at Herrnhut, Saxony. The General Synod of 1931 divided the supervision among the various home provinces, though the work remained and interest of the entire Moravian Church.

In addition to the provinces referred to above, mention should be made of three enterprises that are called "undertakings of the Unity.

The first is the work among the Tibetan refugees at Rajpur in Northern India. This includes a boarding school and hostel and small clinic. Until the Unity Synod of 1967 the Moravian work in Ladakh had been called a province. Political situations in recent years so changed the picture that the humanitarian efforts have replaced the former efforts to carry on congregational work in that part of the world.

The second is the service which the Moravian Church is carrying on among the lepers of Palestine. From 1867 to 1951 the Jesus Help Home for lepers was operated near Jerusalem. After the State of Israel was founded the home was closed and the property sold in 1951.

For a time the Moravian deaconesses who had been serving the lepers attempted to continue the work at Silwan, near Jerusalem. The facilities there were totally inadequate, and it soon became apparent that other arrangements would have to be made.

As a result property was purchased at Ramallah in Jordan and a new, modern leprosarium was erected. It opened its doors in 1960 to the lepers, many of whom were former patients of the Jesus Help Home. Since the War of 1967 this area has been occupied by the Israeli
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

government, but the home continues its work with the lepers. This leper work is a project supported by all the provinces of the Moravian Unity.

The third is the work of the Moravian Church in the Dominican Republic which is a part of an ecumenical group called the Evangelical Protestant Church in the Dominican Republic. The Board of Foreign Missions of the Moravian Church in America is one of the co-sponsors of this federation.
CHAPTER II

A Liturgical Church

The Moravian Church is counted among the Protestant churches generally referred to as “liturgical churches.” By a liturgy is meant “a prepared form of prayer that includes participation on the part of the congregation.” It was to provide for this participation and to give form and order to worship that liturgies came into use in the early Christian Church.

The Moravian Church has adopted for its use many of the liturgical forms of other churches. The Renewed Church, for example, took over many of the liturgies of the Lutheran Church of Germany. The Moravian Church has also developed a number of liturgies that are distinctively Moravian. One of these is the Liturgy for Easter Morning.

The Hymnal of the Moravian Church in America, published in 1969, under the general heading of “The Liturgies and Ritual,” lists a total of thirty-two services. These are the Litany, the Liturgy of Confession, the Liturgy of Trust, the Liturgy of Adoration, the Liturgy of Covenanting, the Te Deum Laudamus, and the Festival Doxology; sixteen liturgies for the Church Year and Special Occasions; and nine liturgies for the Rites and Sacraments of the Church.

The Festival Doxology, to be used on the great festivals of the Church and on other special occasions, is really a hymn or anthem, and appeared first in the English Moravian Hymn Book of 1826.

The Litany

The word “litany” is of Greek origin and means “to ask.” It finally came to mean a series of petitions made in public worship with responses by the people.

This form was used first in the Greek Church and then in the Latin Church, especially in ecclesiastical processions, where priests at the head of the procession chanted a petition and the congregation following chanted the response.

The Brethren of the Unitas Fratrum, when they organized in 1457, dropped many of the prevailing Church forms as part of their “protest” against the evils existing in the Roman Church, and their first hymnal, published in 1501, did not contain a litany.

The first Moravian hymnal to contain a litany was the Unity
Hymnal of 1566 which included in its pages the Litany of Martin Luther.

In 1731 the litany was introduced into the services at Herrnhut. It was modeled on Luther’s litany, with which Zinzendorf had been familiar from childhood. It was translated into English in 1754, and at that time hymns for congregational singing were introduced.

During the years, the litany has been revised a number of times. In its present form as given in the Moravian Hymnal there are many features of historic interest.

The Kyrie Eleison (Lord, have mercy upon us) with which the litany begins, has come down from the earliest days of the Christian Church. Today it is used in the Latin, Greek, Episcopal, Lutheran, Reformed and Moravian Churches.

The prayer of confession offered by the congregation is followed by a distinctly Moravian response by the minister. He, still kneeling, says, *Thus saith the Lord, etc.* This indicates that it is the Lord who forgives sin, and He only.

Of the stanzas selected in 1876, when the litany was last revised, the first, *O Lord, have mercy on us all,* comes from the undivided Christian Church of the fourth century.

Following the Credo (the Apostles’ Creed) comes the Gloria Patri (Glory be to the Father), a very old chant. Then comes the Pater Noster (the Lord’s Prayer), which originally was sung or chanted in the litany.

The stanza, *O God and Lord Thou Lamb once slain,* comes from the sixteenth century and is part of the Gloria in the Moravian liturgy book published in 1755.

The obsecrations, prayers to be preserved from the evils named, and the deprecations, prayers to be helped because of what the Lord has done, are distinctly characteristic of a litany, differing from an order of worship or liturgy. The responses made by Moravian worshippers differ from those used in other churches.

The hymn *Most Holy Lord and God* was written in Latin in the ninth century and translated into English in the eighteenth century. It is a great confession of faith and contains the fundamental Christia doctrines of the deity of Christ and of the Atonement, cardinal
A LITURGICAL CHURCH

doctrines of the Moravian faith.

The prayers in the litany are nearly all taken directly from the Bible. The Moravian Hymn Book, printed in London in 1849, and the editions printed in Pennsylvania from 1851 to 1873, give the verse of Scripture from which each is taken. The prayer, "Grant that all of us, in every age and station, etc.," compresses into one the petitions which formerly were offered for each choir or class of the congregation.

The fourth hymn stanza, "Lord, for Thy coming us prepare," was written by Christian Gregor, organist at Herrnhut, member of the Unity Elders' Conference, and bishop of the Moravian Church, to whom the Moravian Church owes the chorale form which has made Moravian church music so distinctive. The hymn states the Moravian belief in the second coming of Christ and the attitude in which it should be awaited.

The litany ends with the Agnus Dei (O Thou Lamb of God) and a repetition of the Kyrie (O Christ, hear us).

**Baptism**

The Moravian Church believes in baptism, both of infants and of adults, and provides liturgies for both classes.

In the liturgy of the Baptism of Children the child is presented by the parents, who publicly declare their intention "to bring up the child in the fear and admonition of the Lord." Sponsors, by their presence, join in undertaking this duty.

The minister baptizes the child by pouring or sprinkling water on its head and pronounces the admonition: "therefore live, yet not you, but Christ live in you; and the life which you now live in the flesh, live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved you, and gave Himself for you." This is followed by the Old Testament benediction.

Infant Baptism makes a child a non-communicant member of the congregation. It must be followed by public profession of faith and confirmation in later years to admit him to full communicant membership.

In Adult Baptism a person who has not been baptized in infancy makes public profession of faith in Christ and of his desire to "live
under Christ in His kingdom, and serve Him in holiness and righteousness throughout life.

In all evangelical churches the candidate is baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). For two hundred years the Moravian Church has introduced these words with the phrase "Into the death of Jesus I baptize thee." The Synod of 1751 explained that this was "Biblical and necessary, as otherwise there is no reference to the human life of our Saviour, and the Apostle expressly said that ye who were baptized were baptized into His death" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

In some congregations sponsors are selected, who shall assist the new member in becoming better acquainted with the Christian life and with the customs of the church.

By Adult Baptism a person becomes a full communicant member.

The General Synod of 1957 states that "Baptism into the death of Jesus is administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in the presence of the congregation." It is only in the case of emergencies that exceptions are made to this rule.

Confirmation

Confirmation is a rite of the Church by which persons baptized in infancy confirm their baptismal covenant by making a public profession of faith in Jesus and then receive the blessing of the Lord. This rite admits them to the Holy Communion.

The Rite of Confirmation was practiced in the ancient Unitas Fratrum. In the renewed Unitas Fratrum it was used for a candidate prior to the Lord's Supper on the thirteenth of August, 1727, but it did not come into general use in the Moravian Church until about 1751.

Candidates for confirmation are carefully instructed by the minister in the doctrines of the Christian faith and are examined as touching their personal faith in Christ and their desire to become faithful members of the congregation.

In the Moravian Church a deacon, presbyter, or bishop may officiate at the service of confirmation. Certain questions (found on pages 111 and 112 in the Hymnal) are addressed to the candidate and are answered by him. Then the candidate kneels, the minister lays his
A LITURGICAL CHURCH

hands on his head, repeats a text which has been selected to serve as a
watchword for the candidate and pronounces the Old Testament benediction, which in the Moravian Church is always closed with the addition of the New Testament phrase “In the Name of Jesus, Amen.”

The Lord’s Supper

The form in which the Lord’s Supper is administered in the Moravian Church differs from that in any other church and goes back directly to the earliest years of the ancient Unitas Fratrum, when communicants stood to receive the sacraments as a protest against the Catholic “Adoration of the Host” which was based on the doctrine that the bread and wine became the actual Body and Blood of Jesus at the words of consecration.

In a Moravian congregation the communicants do not go forward to the Communion table to partake, but the bread and cup are brought to them by the officiating minister. In the Moravian Church in America wafers of unleavened bread are the custom.

The seating of the communicants is so arranged that the minister can pass between the rows. He breaks the bread and places a portion into the ungloved right hand of each communicant, who receives it standing. The congregation sings until all have been served, then the communicants partake, all standing, and then kneel in prayer.

Formerly a large Communion cup passed from hand to hand along each pew. Today all of the congregations use the individual service. The cup also is received standing. The congregation again sings until all are served, then they partake standing and kneel in prayer. At the beginning and again at the close of the service of Holy Communion, the communicants give to those standing to the right and to the left the “right hand of fellowship.” The right hand of fellowship following the opening prayer signifies “oneness in Christ.” At the close it signifies “renewed dedication and unity of purpose in the service of Christ.”

The Moravian Hymnal gives eight series of hymns suitable for use in Communion. The hymns have been selected in such a way that each series carries out a definite line of thought. Some are intended for special anniversaries, others for general occasions. All, of course, bear directly on the Lord’s Supper, and its meaning for Christians.
Jesus, we thus obey
   Thy last and kindest word,
And in Thine own appointed way
   We come to meet Thee, Lord.

From the beginning, the Moravian Church has refused to enter controversy concerning the mysteries of the Lord’s Supper, and the words of institution are the words Jesus used when he gave the bread and cup to His disciples, omitting any human interpretation.

Communicant members of other denominations are welcome to partake of the Lord’s Supper with any Moravian congregation.

Surplice

The name was given to the surplice in the eleventh century, from a custom of wearing it over a fur-lined cassock or pelisse necessary during long services in a cold church.

When the founders of the Unitas Fratrum broke away from the Roman and Utraquist Churches in Bohemia they abandoned the use of church robes, as an outward sign of their protest against the abuses of those churches.

In 1609, at the time of the federation of the protestants in Bohemia, (Unitas Fratrum, Lutherans, and Reformed), some ministers of the Brethren followed the Lutherans and wore a black robe when preaching and when administering the Sacraments. This gave offense to the Utraquists, then the State Church of Bohemia, and several of the bishops began to use the white surplice.

An old engraving shows Bishop John Amos Comenius, the link between the ancient and the renewed Unitas Fratrum, wearing a white robe, with a narrow belt tied on one side.

The surplice was not introduced into the renewed Unitas Fratrum, or Moravian Church, until 1748. An official diary under date of September 8, 1748, gives the story in full detail.

In a conference with leaders of the Single Brethren, held on November 15, 1747, Count Zinzendorf remarked that it might be well for the Brethren to wear white robes, at least once a year, as a sign of their anticipated blessedness when they should become pure souls through the merits of the Saviour (Rev. 1:13; 7:9; 19:8).
A LITURGICAL CHURCH

The Sisters, he said, had led the way in the white dresses they wore on special church occasions. He cited the custom in the Apostolic Church, when those who were baptized wore white for eight days following the ceremony.

The Single Brethren took up this suggestion to the extent that the ministers wore white robes when they served Communion to the Single Brethren at Herrnhaag, on May 2, 1748.

On September 8 of the same year, as preparation was being made for the Lord’s Supper, Count Zinzendorf decided to “try whether the old church custom of wearing the surplice could be reintroduced into the Unity of Brethren. It had been dropped only as a sign of separation and certain Lutheran congregations still used it.” So the five Brethren who were to officiate “donned robes like those worn in the Octava Alborum (the White Week), except that instead of the golden girdle of the Priest of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5, 6, 13), His priests wore a girdle the color of His wounds.”

How rapidly the use of the surplice spread is not known. Bishop Spangenberg, in his “Declaration” published in 1751, said that some of the Brethren disliked all forms of ceremony, while others considered them useful and belonging to proper decorum. “Each minister acts in general according to the preferences of his own congregation.” “The white surplice which is used by our ministers in some places when they administer the Sacraments, is nothing new. It is known that the Apostolic Church used the alb.” “We found these white robes in our (Lutheran) parish in Upper Lusatia.” “So far as the form is concerned it differs at different places.”

No stress was laid upon the color of the girdle. Apparently those ministers who wished to do so wore a red girdle when presiding over the Communion or other important church rites. An old print of about 1750 indicates that three officiating bishops wore the red girdle, while the candidate for consecration as a bishop wore the white surplice with a white girdle. The red girdle was dropped by the Synod of 1769.

The Synod of 1769 provided that ministers who wore the surplice for adult baptism should wear it also for infant baptisms.

The General Synod of 1789 definitely stated that “the use of the
surplice at the Lord’s Supper shall be introduced everywhere; it shall also be used at adult baptisms.” This brought it to America, where it had apparently not been in use until that time, although there is one reference to its use in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1750, at which time it did not meet with the approval of the people.

It was also noted by Synod that some English Moravian ministers were wearing the surplice at infant baptisms, and it was advised that all English Moravian ministers should do this.

In the Southern Province the use of the surplice for Communions and adult baptisms followed the instructions of the Synod of 1789. It was first used at a wedding in November, 1895.

When a surplice is worn by a minister it indicates that he has eliminated himself, and that in the rite which is being performed the blessings must come directly from God. Therefore the surplice is used properly when baptizing an infant or an adult; when giving the confirmation blessings; when administering the sacraments; for ordinations and for consecrations. It may also be used at the solemnization of matrimony, because the minister may solemnize it only as an ordained servant of Christ and may consecrate the union only in the name of the Lord.
CHAPTER III

The Church Year

Through the years many customs and practices have so fixed themselves in the life and services of the Moravians that they have come to be considered distinctive of the Moravian Church. Some of these are memorial days belonging to the Moravian Church alone. Others belong to the church universal and are observed by several other churches besides the Moravian, but the Moravian Church has given to them certain features which differ from those in other churches.

The arrangement of a Church Year was a gradual development during the first six hundred years of the Christian Church. Various plans were tried, and various dates were selected for the beginning of the Church Year. The church leaders felt the need of a definite schedule for the study of the life of Christ and of the essential doctrines of the Christian religion.

That Sunday, the day on which the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the tomb, should be the beginning of the Christian week was the first step and was taken almost immediately. In the course of time the beginning of the Church Year was placed four Sundays before Christmas day, allowing four Sundays of preparation for the great Christmas festival.

Along with the development of a schedule for the Church Year there developed a feeling that some definite contribution toward spiritual growth should be presented each Sunday and special passages of Scripture were assigned to each Sunday. This followed the custom in the Jewish synagogue, where set lessons from the Law and the Prophets were read, as they were read by the Lord when he spoke in the synagogue at Nazareth.

The new series of lessons from the Epistles and Gospels, however, did not follow the Jewish pattern, but followed the schedule of the new Church Year. These lessons were called the Pericopes, a Greek word meaning "to cut around," in other words selected extracts. For over fourteen hundred years, with a few slight alterations, these same lessons have been used by the Greek Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholics, the Church of England, the Episcopal, Lutheran, Reformed
and Moravian churches. In the American Episcopal Church the
Pericopes are read in the Communion service. In Moravian Churches
they are usually read during the regular service of worship, though
their use is not required and ministers are free to vary from this
practice. Alternate lists of these selected readings are found in the

Advent

The Church Year does not coincide with the secular calendar
year, but begins four Sundays before Christmas Day, with the First
Sunday in Advent.

Advent is a Latin word, meaning "coming," and was chosen to
designate the four weeks of preparation for the celebration of the
birth of Christ. Each of the Advent Sundays stresses a definite idea,
which is indicated by the appointed readings from the Gospels and
Epistles, and by the Moravian liturgy provided for the day.

For the First Sunday in Advent the reading from the Gospel gives
the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and so pictures the com-
ing of the Messianic King. The Epistle selection stresses brotherly love
and gives a preview of the teachings of the Lord.

The Moravian liturgical service for the First Sunday in Advent is
a grand program of praise. The opening hymn,

Hail to the Lord's anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed
His reign on earth begun!

was written by the English Moravian, James Montgomery, and strikes
the keynote for the entire service. The authorship of the other hymns
and something about the persons who wrote them, can be found in
the Hymnal of 1969 by noting the name at the top of each hymn as
it appears in the main portion of the Hymnal and finding that name
in the Index of Authors and Translators on page 783.

The liturgy for the First Sunday in Advent provides a place for
the singing of the Hosanna anthem, composed by Christian Gregor in
1783 (No. 115 in the Hymnal). Another Hosanna Chorus, also sung
antiphonally, was composed by Edward Leinbach, a Moravian musi-
nian of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. It has been published and is now available for congregations who wish to use it.

*The Second Sunday in Advent* is dedicated to the second coming of Christ in glory, to judge both the living and the dead. The Gospel reading stresses the judgment; the Epistle points out that the second coming shall be a day of rejoicing for the whole world, both Jew and Gentile.

The Moravian liturgy for the day presents both aspects of the Second Coming, but begins with the triumphant hymn,

```
Christ is coming! let creation
  From her pain and anguish cease;
Let the glorious proclamation
  Hope restore and faith increase;
Christ is coming;
Come, Thou blessed Prince of Peace!
```

Apart from the hymns, the Second Advent Liturgy is largely composed of verses from the Bible.

For the *Third Sunday in Advent* the liturgy for the First Sunday in Advent is used again. The Gospel lesson pictures the Lord Jesus at work in the world while He lived on earth; the Epistle refers to the eternal importance of the deeds of men.

The liturgy for the *Fourth Sunday in Advent* is again the same as for the First Sunday. The Gospel gives John’s distinct announcement of Jesus as the Christ. The Epistle calls on men to rejoice in Him and to look to Him for peace.

In some Moravian churches the hymn, *Morning Star*, is sung antiphonally at the service for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. In most churches it is used on Christmas Eve. This hymn was written by Johann Scheffler, a physician of Silesia, who lived from 1624 to 1677. A new tune for it was composed by the Rev. Francis F. Hagen in 1842, and it was published as sheet music with words translated by the Rev. Martin Hauser, a Moravian living in Illinois. The words in the Moravian Hymnal of 1969, Hymn No. 51, were translated by the Rev. Bennett Harvey, Jr., an English Moravian, in 1885.
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

The Star

In many Moravian homes there is a large many-pointed star which is carefully preserved from year to year. With the approach of the Christmas season this star is brought out and hung in hall or porch where it remains until the Christmas decorations are taken down. Sometimes it is an Advent Star, appearing on the first Sunday in Advent, heralding the approaching Christmas festival; sometimes it is a Christmas Star, reserved until the evergreens are placed for Christmas. Always it is a lighted star, shining to proclaim its message.

Who invented the "Moravian Star" is not known. Apparently it originated in the evening handicraft sessions at the Paedagogium in Niesky, Germany, about 1850. In the 1880's Pieter Verbeek attended the Paedagogium as a student; later he began to make the stars for sale, with the help of two or three young girls who worked at home. His son, Harry Verbeek, learned the art from his father, and later founded the Herrnhut star factory. The elder Verbeek made the earlier stars with points which could be fastened to a rigid metal core; later he and his son learned to make points which could be fastened together with paper fasteners. For some years the two Verbeeks had charge of the book store in Herrnhut, and there they received orders for the stars made in the star factory, which were shipped to many places, the directions for assembling them being printed in four languages. When the war closed the Herrnhut star factory, Moravians in other areas also took up the business of supplying this much beloved Christmas emblem.

The Moravian Star has a three-fold message.

It testifies to the greatness of the Creator who made the stars on the fourth day (Gen. 1:16), numberless (Gen. 15:5), differing in glory (I Cor. 15:41), and praising the might that laid the foundations of the world (Job 38:7).

It is a reminder of the star that once led the Wise Men from their distant homes until "it came and stood over the house where the young Child was," and they fell down before Him and worshipped Him (Matt. 2: 2, 7, 9, 10).

It points to the Divine Star, foretold by the prophet who said, "A Star shall come out of Jacob" (Num. 24:17), and fulfilled in
THE CHURCH YEAR

Him who said of Himself, "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16).

Light of the world, into our hearts
Let Thy full glory shine,
That we may follow now Thy star
Until we reach Thy shrine.

Christmas Eve

No special liturgy is provided for Christmas Eve, but most Moravian congregations celebrate the day with a candle service using the lighted wax tapers or Moravian Christmas candles. Because of the large number of people attending, it is now often necessary for the congregations to hold two or more of these services. In some churches one of the services is planned especially for children. Many congregations combine a lovefeast with the candle service.

Christmas Candles

What appears to be the origin of the Moravian use of lighted wax tapers at the Christmas Eve lovefeast has been found in the *Gemein Diarium* (Unity Diary) for December 24, 1747. A translation of the entry follows:

The Watch Service for the children of Marienborn was held by Br. Johannes von Watteville. "A hymn was sung. Br. Johannes asked questions concerning the birth of Jesus, and the children answered." The questions and answers were lines from hymns familiar to the children, and are given in the account in the Diary. "Then Br. Johannes spoke of the inexpressible blessedness which came through the birth of Jesus; among other things that by His wounds and pierced side he had lighted a blood-red flame of love in every heart, which would burn forever to His joy and our salvation. For an impressive reminder of this, each child was to receive a burning taper, tied with a small red ribbon. . . . Then the children held their tapers aloft and Br. Johannes sang *Does your heart burn?* and also

O little Jesus, Thee I love!
Kindle a pure and holy flame
Within the heart of every child,
Like that which from Thine own heart came."
No record exists of a similar service in Herrnhut that year, but one was held in the following year, which indicates that the idea had found acceptance in the Moravian Church.

The first record of the use of candles on Christmas Eve in America comes from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in the diary of 1756. In North Carolina the Christmas candles were used for the first time in the children’s lovefeasts of Bethabara and Bethania in 1762. In all these services the emphasis was laid on the love of Jesus, which led Him to come as the Babe of Bethlehem, prepared to atone for mankind, and the response which should be a flame of love in the heart of every child. Today it stresses rather the light which came into the world with the birth of Christ and the response which every Christian should make by witnessing for Him.

The early American records make no mention of a red ribbon around the taper, probably because ribbon was scarce in colonial days. Historically, the paper frill used today should be red and if the non-inflammable red crepe paper is used the danger from fire is practically removed.

**Christmas Day**

For Christmas there is a short but beautiful liturgy provided in the Hymnal. It consists largely of quotations from the Bible, but contains the *Gloria in Excelsis* (Glory be to God on high) which is one of the oldest hymns of the Christian church. It is so old that its origin is not known, but it was in use within a hundred years of the time of Christ.

Though some congregations have a service on Christmas Day, as a rule this liturgy is used on the Sunday nearest Christmas Day. The lessons for Christmas Day emphasize the doctrine of the incarnation. There is a distinct difference between the Gospel and Epistle; the one giving the historic fact of the birth and the other the doctrine connected with it. The deep spiritual value of the Christmas festival is that it celebrates the greatest miracle of all ages, when God became incarnate.

**The Putz**

The word *putz* simply means a decoration, but American Moravians use it in a special way to mean a distinctive kind of Christmas decoration.
THE CHURCH YEAR

Probably the idea came from the church of the Middle Ages, when priests placed figures of the Holy Family in the churches so that their unlettered people might get a clearer idea of the Christmas story.

Whatever the origin, the Moravian settlers in America brought the idea with them and carried it out at an early date. Levering's *History of Bethlehem* does not give the date of its introduction into Pennsylvania, but the putz is a cherished custom in that city.

The diarist of Bethabara, North Carolina, put in many interesting details of life in that village, so it is known that the men and women of Bethabara arranged a putz there in 1760.

It was a year of fierce Indian war. The village of Bethabara and the Bethabara mill had been stockaded and were crowded with refugees, and the pastor of Bethabara invited the refugee children from the mill to come to Bethabara to see the nativity scene which had been arranged there. As they looked he told them the Christmas story, which most of them had heard for the first time.

In its simplest form the putz is arranged as a reminder of the manger scene in the cave stable of Bethlehem. In some Moravian families the nativity figures are heirlooms; in others they are beautifully carved figures imported from abroad; in still others they are quite new and have been bought at a variety store. Arranged with taste and skill they form the center of the putz. Other items are often added, such as the sheep on a neighboring hillside, or the approaching Magi. Beyond this, individual fancy plays. Hills, and valleys, the little town of Bethlehem, a farmhouse and farm yard, a lake with fowls, a windmill, a stream, a castle, any and all may represent the world, centered about the wondrous manger. Such a putz, or "Bethlehem," is widely used among Moravians. In some countries the covering of the hills may be freshly gathered moss; in others the moss may have been gathered months before and stored for Christmas; in still others sod may be used. The putz may be on the floor at the foot of a gaily decorated Christmas tree; or it may be on a small table with only a bit of evergreen as a background. Always its purpose is to tell the story of the first Christmas in the cave stable of Bethlehem of Judea.

Epiphany

Tradition says that it was on January 6 that the Wise Men came
to Bethlehem, following the star which led them to Him "who is born King of the Jews."

The word Epiphany means manifestation, revelation, a showing forth. The message of Epiphany, as shown in the lesson for the day, is the manifestation of Christ to the Wise Men from the east.

The Moravian liturgy for Epiphany is therefore distinctly and appropriately a missionary liturgy. The day may well be appointed as a mission day in a congregation. Where it is necessary to hold the mission rally later in the year, the Epiphany liturgy may still be used, and it is appropriate for opening any missionary gathering, large or small.

Epiphany is followed in the Church Year by six Epiphany Sundays.

The lesson for the first Sunday after Epiphany is the story of Jesus in the Temple with the doctors, that is the manifestation of Jesus to the wise men of the Jews.

The lesson for the second Sunday is devoted to the first miracle of the Lord, the changing of water into wine, with the manifestation of Jesus to His own disciples.

The third Sunday reveals His marvelous power over disease in the healing of the leper.

The fourth Sunday shows His power over the forces of nature in the stilling of the storm.

The fifth Sunday manifests His wonderful ability to teach in parables.

The sixth Sunday is a manifestation of His glory in His transfiguration.

The fifth and sixth Sundays rarely occur because of the movable date of Easter, but the whole Epiphany season presents the progressive manifestation of the Lord from His birth to His transfiguration, from helpless infancy to divine glory.

**Lent**

The three Sundays preceding Lent are known by Latin names indicating the number of days before Easter, not counting the Sundays. Septuagesima falls within the seventy-day period; Sexagesima is
THE CHURCH YEAR

sixty days; Quinquagesima, fifty days.

*Ash Wednesday*, forty days before Easter, not counting Sundays, is the beginning of Lent. The name comes from a custom in the early Roman Catholic Church of sprinkling on the heads of penitents water into which had been poured the ashes of palms brought to the church on Palm Sunday of the preceding year.

The Latin names of the Sundays in Lent are the opening words of the Psalms which were chanted in Latin in the ancient church, preceding the Mass on those special days.

On the *first Sunday* in Lent the Gospel lesson tells the story of the temptation in the wilderness.

The lesson for the *second Sunday* shows the Lord’s power over demons.

For the *third Sunday* the source of the Lord’s power over evil is explained.

On the *fourth Sunday* the story is the feeding of the five thousand, showing the Lord’s wonder-working power.

The Gospel lesson for the *fifth Sunday* stresses the pre-eminence of Jesus.

On *Palm Sunday* Jesus is presented as the Triumphant King.

The Moravian General Synod of 1818 recommended that congregations set a definite time for the doctrinal instruction of young people and adults who were not members of the church, and that as many as were ready to take the step should be received on a designated day, after public profession of their faith. Prior to this date candidates had been carefully prepared, but there had been no attempt to invite all young people to consider taking the step together. Lent offered itself as an appropriate time for the special instruction period, and Palm Sunday as an appropriate day for adult baptism and confirmation, and this became a custom. The modern trend is toward a longer period of instruction. Baptisms, confirmations, and receptions are not limited to Palm Sunday and may occur at any time.

There is a special liturgy for use during Lent. On Palm Sunday the liturgy for the First Sunday in Advent may be used again, unless the number of persons to be received into church membership makes it advisable to omit it.
There are three distinctive features of the observance of Passion Week, or Holy Week, by the Moravian Church. These are the Reading Meetings, the Maundy Thursday Communion, and the Great Sabbath lovefeast.

The Reading Meetings begin on the evening of Palm Sunday and continue through the Friday before Easter Sunday. In these meetings there is no address. The singing of a hymn, and a prayer are followed by reading from the Passion Week Manual, a Harmony of the Gospels covering the incidents of the last week of the earthly life of the Lord.

Many of the members of a Moravian congregation own copies of the Passion Week Manual and bring them to church. In some congregations copies are distributed at each service so that each person present may follow as the minister reads aloud.

As early as 1770 it became customary to interrupt the reading at frequent intervals, so that the congregation might sing a suitable stanza from some hymn. The present editions of the Manual print these stanzas at the appointed place in the text.

So far as possible the accounts are read on the days of the week on which the incidents occurred, although there is no account for Wednesday and the account of Tuesday is very long.

The evening of Maundy Thursday is dedicated to the Lord’s Supper, which was instituted by the Lord on the Thursday evening of the Passion Week. The name Maundy comes from the Latin words mandamus est, “It is commanded,” in remembrance of the “new commandment” given by Jesus on that evening (John 13:34). Members of a Moravian congregation make every effort to attend this most holy Communion, and members of other churches are invited to come to the table “of their Lord and ours.”

On Good Friday the Saviour is followed in thought to Calvary and to the tomb in Joseph’s garden. There is a trend today among the churches of the Southern Province to hold lovefeasts as a part of the reading service on Friday night.

The lovefeast on Great Sabbath which is still held in the large centers such as Bethlehem and Winston-Salem is in memory of the rest of Jesus in the grave and is an appropriate transition from the
thoughts of the passion of the Lord to the glory of His resurrection.

**Passion Week Manual**

From the early diaries of the American settlements it is evident that during Passion Week, or Holy Week, the minister read to the congregation such extracts from the Gospels as he chose as appropriate. The Archive collections show one or two manuscript books which apparently were made by a minister for this use.

In 1757 a *Harmony of the Gospels* was printed in German, bearing a title which in translation is "The Story of the Days of the Son of Man, compiled from the Four Gospels." The book has no date of publication, but the preface is dated March 5, 1757. A note in the appendix states that "this may be the first attempt to prepare a Harmony of the Gospels." A second edition of this Harmony of the Gospels appeared in 1759, and a note on page 188 shows that the book was compiled by Count Zinzendorf.

It is said that Zinzendorf was well acquainted with the form of critical Bible study, in which parallel passages were placed side by side on a page, but that he wanted a compilation which was suitable for devotional use. That he thought this a new idea was natural. Research has shown that there had been two similar attempts in the past, but the one or two copies remaining had been lost for centuries and were not discovered until many years after the death of Zinzendorf.

Zinzendorf was a fine linguist, so he did not rely on other translations of the Gospels but made his own when he thought he could improve on the Luther translation. This was not entirely satisfactory to persons who were accustomed to the wording used by Luther, and in 1764, four years after the death of Zinzendorf, a new compilation was made by the Rev. Samuel Lieberkuehn, a Moravian minister, who was highly esteemed for his knowledge of the Bible. The preface says that the compiler had made some changes in chronology, in accordance with the conclusions of certain modern Biblical scholars, and that the text was taken from the Luther translation of the Bible. In the latter part of the Harmony the story of Passion Week was divided, each portion assigned to its own day for the reading thereof. The Lieberkuehn Harmony was published in 1768. It was translated into
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

English and was published in England in 1771, the text of the "King James version" being used.

Several American editions have appeared of the Lieberkuehn compilation. Many Moravian congregations in America now use the edition "Readings For Holy Week" which was published in 1969. It uses the revised Standard Version of the Bible for the text.

Easter

The idea of an Early Easter Service, to be held at sunrise in a graveyard, originated among the Moravians of Herrnhut in 1732. A group of young men, meeting for prayer on the preceding evening, decided that "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" they, like the disciples, would go to the place of burial. Unlike the disciples, they knew that "The Lord is risen," and to Him they planned to sing their hymns of praise.

The impromptu service of these young men proved so impressive that it became a custom, and it was brought to America by the early Moravian settlers who introduced it in their communities in colonial days. When properly carried out it is one of the most impressive and one of the most devotional services of the year.

The service of the Salem Congregation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, may be given as illustrative of its observance, since it has come to be the most largely attended.

About two o'clock in the morning all the Moravian musicians who play in the band assemble in groups and go throughout the city, playing Easter chorales, partly to waken people who will attend the Early Service, and partly to remind all listeners of the Resurrection of which the music speaks.

The service begins in front of the Home Church. In form the service is simple. There are no ceremonial trappings, no cross. (The cross belonged to Good Friday; this is the day of Resurrection!) From the speaker's stand comes the voice of the minister in charge, The Lord is risen! From the reverent multitude comes the response, The Lord is risen indeed! Even so the disciples greeted each other in the first years after the first Easter dawn.

After a few more sentences from the Service for Easter Morning
(found on page 54 of the Hymnal) the congregation moves from the church to God's Acre, about a block away. As they go, the musicians play Easter chorales antiphonally, answering each other from the points where they are stationed until the last one has entered the central gate behind the congregation.

When all have gathered on the walks which surround the squares where lie those who have "fallen asleep in the Lord," the remainder of the liturgy is read, with the band leading the singing of the appointed hymns. There is no address, only the great confession of faith which is the liturgy for Easter morning.

The Moravian Church has also provided a beautiful liturgy for *Easter Day*, which is generally used at morning worship. It begins with the admonition,

The day of resurrection,
Earth, tell it out abroad.

It closes with the triumphant hymn, "Sing Hallelujah, Praise The Lord!"

**God's Acre**

This name, in the Moravian acceptance of the term, does not mean an acre dedicated to God. It means *God's field*, in which the bodies of Christians are laid awaiting the resurrection.

In the old diaries the Moravians never said that a member had died; some more expressive phrase was always used. In the old Church Registers the column for the date of death was headed *Fell Asleep*. The general heading for the death records was *Went Home and was laid in the Grave*.

The liturgy for the Early Service on Easter morning, which is one of the oldest of the Moravian liturgies, carries out the same idea of a planted field,

*The body which I shall put off, this grain of corruptibility, shall put on incorruption.*

This explains why Moravian congregations established their own burial grounds and why they called their graveyards "God's Acre." They felt that only in a place of burial which was used by Christians
was it fitting to hold the Early Easter Service and affirm belief in the resurrection of all through faith in the risen Christ.

A typical Moravian God’s Acre has certain characteristics. It is laid off in rather large squares, and these squares are assigned to definite groups in the church family. Married women and widows are buried, chronologically, in one square; married men and widowers in another. Single men are on one side of a square, with little boys on the other side of the same square; single women and little girls share another square. The idea is that those who were most closely associated in life, whose interests and responsibilities gave them most in common, will want to be together in repose.

There are no monuments. On each grave is a slab of marble, bearing the name of the person interred there, the dates of birth and death, and often a Bible verse, or a few suitable words. These gravestones are of uniform size for adults; somewhat smaller on the smaller graves of children.

Traditionally all graves face the east. Formerly, whenever possible, the graveyard was placed on the slope of a hill facing the east. These, however, are customs, not rules.

Members of a Moravian congregation which has a typical Moravian God’s Acre are not obligated to burial therein. If the ordinary family plot is preferred and a cemetery of the usual type is available, there is no objection to the purchase and use of a family plot.

Usually, however, burial in God’s Acre is considered a privilege. As a rule, the congregation bears the expense of the proper care of the area, including the individual graves, after the stones have been placed by the family.

Members of congregations which do not have such a God’s Acre use the cemeteries or memorial parks of their communities.

**Ascension Day**

Three of the Sundays following Easter should be mentioned.

For **Ascension Day** the Moravian Church provides a beautiful liturgy, which begins

Hail the day which sees Him rise,
Glorious, to His native skies.

50
THE CHURCH YEAR

Associated with this liturgy is the concluding portion of the Passion Week Manual. This final chapter gives the History of the Ascension of our Lord, bringing to an end the account of His earthly ministry.

**Whitsunday**

*Whitsunday* is so called because in the primitive Church the candidates for baptism on that day wore white garments. The name means simply “white Sunday.” The other name, Pentecost, is from the Greek word meaning fifty, as the day comes just fifty days after Easter.

Whitsunday is the day on which the Church celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

**Trinity Sunday**

*Trinity Sunday* bears this name because it is devoted to the consideration of the Triune God in a specific sense.

From the First Sunday in Advent until this Sunday the Church annually presents for consideration the revelation of God as made known in the earthly life of Christ Jesus.

The revelation of the facts of salvation culminates in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as celebrated on Whitsunday.

Then the Church adds one more festival, to reveal the constitution of the Godhead, which made the divine plan of salvation possible. God the Father evolved the plan; God the Son carried it out; God the Holy Spirit applies it to those who are being saved.

The finite mind cannot comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity. The Moravian Church does not attempt to define the doctrine, but in its liturgy for Trinity Sunday presents the revelation of this great truth in the very words of Scripture, without any human interpretation. This liturgy has received the unqualified admiration of learned theologians of other Churches, and it is probably the most beautiful of the Moravian liturgies.

After Trinity Sunday the schedule of the Church Year merely
numbers the Sundays until the year begins again with the First Sunday in Advent.

The First Sunday after Trinity, the second, and so on, each has its appointed Gospel and Epistle readings. They emphasize various truths made known by Christ without reference to the historical order of events.
CHAPTER IV

A Church Family

Among the surprisingly modern ideas developed by the Moravian Church in the middle of the eighteenth century was the Choir System.

The word Choir came from a Greek word meaning group, and with that meaning there is still a choir of singers in most of the churches.

With a very modern realization of the value of group interests and group activities, the Moravians divided their congregations into choirs or groups, the groups naturally drawn together by sex, age, and condition. In its fullest development each congregation had its group of widowers, of widows, of married people, single men, single women, older boys, older girls, little boys, and little girls. The adult groups were organized with appropriate officers, and often with group funds. Frequently the choirs owned houses, known as the Brothers House, the Sisters House, or the Widows House, where members of the group lived and carried on the usual activities of life.

For each group there were meetings, appropriate to the age and interests of the group. Of special note were the Choir festivals or Covenant Days held annually, usually on a date of historic interest. These were days of prayer and renewed dedication to the service of Christ.

The first choir or group to organize was led by Anna Nitschmann. On May 4, 1730, she and other young women of Herrnhut entered into a covenant to dedicate their lives wholly to the service of the Lord, in whatever field they might be called, whether as Single Sisters or as married, whether in the home or in foreign lands. The covenant day of the Single Sisters is therefore celebrated on May fourth, or the nearest Sunday.

For the Married People the day chosen for the annual covenant day was September 7. This was selected as a compliment to Count and Countess Zinzendorf, who were married on September 7, 1722.

The covenant day of the Single Brethren came on August 28, the anniversary of the day in 1741 when the young men of Herrnhut organized for Christian service along their own lines.

Originally the widowers had their own choir and their own cov-
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

enant day. In America, where widowers were always few in number, they sometimes joined with the Single Brethren and sometimes with the married people, ultimately choosing the latter group.

The widows maintained a separate organization for a much longer time, but finally merged with the married people in their covenant day. In the same way the older boys joined the Single Brethren; and the older girls joined the Single Sisters.

August 17 became the special day for little girls in 1727. The story of the religious experiences of Susanna Kuehnel is often told as being the foundation of this day, but the story of Anna Nitschmann is equally as interesting and just as pertinent. In both cases the experiences of the people of Herrnhut, which led to the Holy Communion of the thirteenth of August, were reflected in the lives of their children, first among the little girls and then among the little boys. For a number of years the festival for the little boys was observed on a separate date, but later it was transferred to the seventeenth of August, which has since been known as the Children’s Festival.

Marriage

The Moravian Church considers marriage “to be honorable among all men,” and “not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God.”

As early as 1764 a special Marriage Liturgy was prepared for use at Moravian weddings. In response to the solemn questions of the marriage ceremony (Hymnal, pp. 116, 117) the man and woman pledge themselves “to live together, in the holy bond of marriage,” and to be “faithful Christian husband and wife so long as both shall live.”

A Moravian member is not forbidden to marry a member of another church, but young people are urged to choose Christian partners for their journey through life and to abide faithfully by their marriage vows. If the bride is a Moravian, her own pastor should perform the ceremony.

Moravian Dress

The so-called Moravian costumes used today for pageants or other occasions, where something distinctive is desired, are merely copies of
A CHURCH FAMILY

portraits in the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pa.

Old prints of services in Herrnhut show a uniformity of dress, but this seems to have been limited to a few congregations. Portraits of leaders of the European Moravian Church in the eighteenth century present quite a variety of styles. Except for the use of the surplice on sacramental occasions, Moravian ministers wore no vestments, but dressed like other men of their period.

The old minute books indicate that in America there was no rule governing the dress of men or women, except that simplicity was stressed. Members were urged to live within their means and extravagance was deplored. The following of changing fashions met with disfavor, because that was considered "an improper attempt to attract attention." In general, the clothes of men and women were the more simple types of their day, except that the women for church services wore the haube, a white linen cap tied with ribbon of a color which indicated to which choir of the congregation each belonged.

Today, the dress of American Moravians differs not at all from that of their contemporaries.

Funerals

The Moravian Church in its Hymnal provides a liturgy for the Burial of the Dead. The first part of this liturgy is intended for use in the service in the church; the second part is used at the grave.

A distinctive feature of a funeral in a Moravian Church is its simplicity. The liturgy for this service is primarily a compilation of passages from the Bible that emphasize praise to God and a firm belief in the resurrection and life eternal. The keynote is sounded in the words, "O Lord, what wait we for? Our hope is in thee."

Other features of a Moravian funeral are readings from the Scriptures, prayers and the singing of hymns. Congregational singing of the great hymns of the church is usually a part of our funerals. Indeed music is one of the two features that are unique to the Moravian Church in its practices associated with the burial of the dead.

The use of a band at the service at the grave is an accepted practice, particularly in congregations that have their own God's Acre. The band is customarily stationed near the grave awaiting the arrival
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

of the funeral procession. As the procession moves toward the grave the band plays the chorale "Goudimel" (205A).

During the concluding part of the liturgy, which comprises the entire service at the grave, the band accompanies the singing by the congregation of two hymn stanzas. One is the committal hymn (Tune 14A),

Now to the earth let these remains
In hope committed be,
Until the body changed attains
Blest immortality.

The other is the closing stanza (Tune 22A),

The Saviour's blood and righteousness
My beauty is, my glorious dress;
Thus well arrayed I need not fear,
When in His presence I appear.

After the benediction the band plays as a postlude the chorale 79A followed, if necessary, by 159A. Should the deceased have been a minister or have served in a musical organization of the church such as the choir or the band or as organist the band also plays after chorale 79A the "Requiem" (Tune 602A) which is associated with the words,

Sleep thy last sleep,
Free from care and sorrow;
Rest, where none weep,
Till the eternal morrow;
Though dark waves roll
O'er the silent river,
Thy fainting soul
Jesus can deliver.

A second feature of a Moravian funeral that is unique is the reading of a memoir of the departed member. The memoir is a brief biography of the deceased prepared by the pastor. These memoirs are deposited in the Archives of the province and afford a store of valuable genealogical information.
The custom of burial according to the choir system rather than in family groups which is discussed in an earlier section on God’s Acre (page 50) emphasizes the nature of the Church as the family of God.

**The Brotherly Agreement**

When descendants of the ancient Unitas Fratrum settled Herrnhut in 1722 they were soon joined by other people with differing backgrounds and ideals. To put an end to the resulting confusion many conferences were held, and on May 12, 1727, the men and women of Herrnhut met with Count Zinzendorf to consider statutes which had been drawn up for the regulation of life in the community. After the Count had explained every article in detail, he invited those who wished to subscribe to come forward and give him their hands and every man and woman present complied.

This *Brotherly Agreement* meant much to the residents in Herrnhut. From a restless, separated, uncertain people they became so united in a common purpose that it attracted the attention of the world of their day and brought many new members into their group.

Since 1727 the Brotherly Agreement has been revised a number of times to bring it into conformity with the best thought of members of congregations in different parts of the world in the change of condition that always comes with the years.

The Brotherly Agreement is neither a creed nor a doctrinal thesis. It sets a pattern for Christian living, a practical standard for the life of church members in everyday affairs, as well as in relation to the church.

**The Cup of Covenant**

The Cup of Covenant, or Cup of Thanksgiving, was used for the first time in Herrnhut in 1728. “It was to prepare the heart for the Communion which could not be held just then.”

During the earlier years of the renewed Unitas Fratrum, or Moravian Church, it was used frequently “to give thanks for special manifestations of grace, and to covenant together for new faithfulness in the service of Jesus.” In Salem, North Carolina, the school teachers and other leaders among the young people and children met
annually to discuss their duties, receive the thanks of the congregation for their labors, and to share the Cup of Covenant as they pledged themselves to renewed fidelity and zeal in their work.

This Cup of Thanksgiving was based on the first cup in the Passover meal (Luke 22:17) and is not to be confused with the second cup (Luke 22:20) which followed the meal and was used by the Lord in instituting the Lord’s Supper.

In the American Moravian Church the Cup of Thanksgiving, otherwise called the Cup of Covenant, is seldom used now except in connection with the covenant day of the ministers of the Moravian Church, which is observed on September 16.

**Sunday Schools**

The Moravian Church was rather slow to organize Sunday schools.

In 1780, Robert Raikes established a Sunday school at Gloucester, England. Into his school he gathered poor, uneducated boys and taught them to read, especially to read the Bible. This type of Sunday school lasted at various places until primary education became general in the establishing of public schools.

Moravian children did not need this kind of a school. In their dayschools they were taught to read and in regular periods of religious instruction they were well grounded in the doctrines of the Christian faith.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century Moravian members became interested in opening the Raikes type of Sunday school for underprivileged children. Bethlehem commenced such a school in the spring of 1816; Salem followed with a school at Hopewell in September of the same year. It was the middle of the century before Sunday schools along more modern lines were commenced for children of Moravian congregations.

Today the Moravian Church considers the Sunday school an important feature of its congregational life. The more intricate pattern of living has curtailed opportunities for religious instruction of children and has thrown much of it upon the Sunday school.

To meet this need the Synods of both Northern and Southern Provinces have elected Boards of Christian Education and Evangelism.
A CHURCH FAMILY

These boards employ full-time executives as well as other persons who are concerned with areas of responsibility for work among children and youth.

It is the responsibility of these boards to promote leadership education, vacation Bible schools, summer camps and conferences, catechetical instruction and to provide approved curriculum materials for the schools of the church.

The two provincial boards cooperate through an Interprovincial Board of Christian Education which seeks to coordinate the work in this field for the entire Moravian Church in America. One of the chief responsibilities of this Interprovincial Board is the publication of Moravian books and literature.

The Interprovincial Board of Christian Education publishes a monthly magazine, "The North American Moravian."
CHAPTER V

A Church That Remembers

The twelfth of May is not commonly observed as a Moravian anniversary day, and yet there are three events of great significance which are associated with that date. Count Zinzendorf once summed them up as follows:

"The twelfth of June, 1722, was an undetermined matter, without signature or stamp. Those who came on May 12, 1724, bore the stamp which for twenty-six years the world has been trying to erase, but it did not succeed, for last year (1749) the Saviour confirmed it, sealed it, renewed it, and made it more effective than ever before."

This rather quaint picture of the renewed Moravian Church as a legal document, first without signature or seal, then signed, then renewed and sealed, leads directly into the history of those days.

June 12, 1722, was the day on which the first emigrants from Moravia reached the estate of Count Zinzendorf in Upper Lusatia, now Saxony. The company consisted of only eleven, counting men, women, and children, and of these only three were "housefathers." Their aims were vague; they had fled from a Roman Catholic country into a land where protestants might live undisturbed, but their thoughts went little further than the gaining of religious freedom.

On the twelfth of May, 1724, five young men from Zauchtenthal, Moravia, arrived at Herrnhut, the little village which the immigrants of two years before were building. Three of them bore the same name, David Nitschmann, and in addition there were Melchior Zeisberger and Johann Toeltschig. All were descendants of the ancient Unitas Fratrum; all desired to live a religious life; all had been threatened with severe punishment if they continued to meet for divine worship and had been definitely forbidden to attempt to leave the country of their birth.

Faced with those alternatives they decided to risk emigration and slipped across the border of Moravia with nothing except their high purpose and dauntless courage.

They reached Herrnhut on the twelfth of May and were disappointed to find it such a small place, but on the same day they attended the laying of the cornerstone for a large house which was being
A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

built for a boys school and were so impressed with the spirit of the occasion that they decided to remain.

So great was the influence of these young men upon the history of the Moravian Church that they have come down in the records as “the five churchmen.” One David Nitschmann went back to preach in his native land, and there suffered the death of a martyr. David Nitschmann, the carpenter, was one of the first two missionaries to the West Indies, became the first bishop of the renewed Unitas Fratrum, led to Pennsylvania the party which founded Bethlehem and was one of the most influential leaders of the Church in Europe. David Nitschmann, the weaver, became the syndic, representing the Moravian Church in negotiations with the governments of various European states. Johann Toeltschig was one of the Moravian colonists in Georgia and served later in England and Ireland. Melchior Zeisberger also became a Moravian minister; he served many years in Denmark, but passed away in Herrnhut, the last of the five churchmen to leave the scene of their earthly labors for the kingdom of God.

May 12, 1727, has already been mentioned in connection with the adoption of the Brotherly Agreement. Two events were set for that day in Herrnhut. One was the giving of the pledge of fidelity from the residents to Count Zinzendorf, who had recently bought the estate of Upper Berthelsdorf from his uncle, the Privy Councillor von Gersdorf, and linked with this was the decision of the residents in regard to the statutes which had been drawn up for their guidance.

In the afternoon the Count called all of his tenants together, men and women, and spoke to them for three hours, explaining the statutes in great detail. He spoke with great earnestness of the evil of division, and explained that in place of an oath of allegiance each man and woman who wished to accept these statutes should give him their hand; those who did not wish to do so were to leave the village at once.

To the surprise of all present everybody accepted the statutes, called the Brotherly Agreement. They promised to live for the Saviour, expressed regret for the sectarian disputes in which they had been indulging and agreed unanimously that from that day all sectarian differences should be ignored.

At that time the congregation of Herrnhut consisted of about
three hundred members, living in thirty-four houses. Probably two-thirds of the residents were immigrants from Moravia.

Writing twenty-one years later, Count Zinzendorf said that the twelfth of May, 1727, decided the question whether Herrnhut should adopt the plan of being a Church of God, or should be merely a small village according to the will of man. The Holy Spirit led them to choose the first.

It was on the twelfth of May, 1749, that the English Parliament passed the act which recognized the Moravian Church as "an ancient protestant episcopal church" and gave it full church privileges in all English colonies. This act was of inestimable value for the work in America. According to Zinzendorf, the Moravians asked for an investigation by Parliament because acts had been passed in the colonies of New York and Virginia which classed them as "secret papists" and the descendants of the first church to organize in protest against the abuses of the papacy could not endure such an unfair designation.

The act of the Colony of New York is still extant and shows a determination on the part of the New York Assembly to prevent Moravian mission work among the Indians. The act, dated 1744, prohibited any "Vagrant Preacher, Moravian or Disguised Papist," from preaching or teaching either in public or in private, and forbade them "to reside among the Indians under pretense of bringing them over to the Christian Faith," unless they had taken the Oath of Allegiance and had secured a License. All other protestant denominations were specifically exempted from the need for securing certificates. No similar act has been found in Virginia at that date, but various acts had been passed earlier which could be called up against the Moravians if the New York act stood. The act of Parliament, following a most complete examination of the numerous documents presented, "was passed with much satisfaction by the Upper and Lower Houses" of Parliament and "was ratified by the king in June, 1749."

This act of Parliament superceded and nullified the New York act and made it impossible to use against the Moravians any antipapist acts there or in Virginia. Probably its greatest value in the American colonies was in the Moravian settlement in North Carolina, which followed four years after the passing of the act. Under it the Morav-
vians in Wachovia claimed and obtained their own parish, their own vestry, and full recognition of their ministerial orders, privileges accorded to no other church so long as North Carolina was an English colony and the Church of England was the established church. While the Revolutionary War wiped out the distinctions between the Moravian and other churches, legally speaking, the act of Parliament still holds as an endorsement of Moravian Church orders.

**August Thirteenth**

Following the agreement of May 12, 1727, by which the residents of Herrnhut obligated themselves to live together in brotherly accord, many conferences and many prayer meetings were held. Finally they felt that they were ready to unite in a celebration of the Lord’s Supper, and it was held on Wednesday morning, August 13, 1727, in the parish church at Berthelsdorf. This church was also on the estate of Count Zinzendorf and was about one mile from the village of Herrnhut.

As the service began two young women were confirmed for their first participation in the Lord’s Supper. Count Zinzendorf offered an impassioned prayer. So great was the blessing felt during this communion and so great and lasting was its influence that it has been called the *birthday of the Renewed Unitas Fratrum, or Moravian Church*. The anniversary is one of the greatest and most important festivals of the Moravian Church.

Probably for the centennial of the event, the English Moravian poet, James Montgomery, wrote the best word-picture known of what took place on August 13, 1727, and its results:

They walked with God in peace and love
   But failed with one another;
While sternly for the faith they strove
   Brother fell out with brother.
But He in whom they put their trust,
Who knew their frames that they were dust.
   Pitied and healed their weakness.
He found them in His house of prayer
   With one accord assembled,
CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

And so revealed His presence there
They wept for joy and trembled.
One cup they drank, one bread they brake,
One baptism shared, one language spake,
Forgiving and forgiven.
Then forth they went, with tongues of flame
In one blest theme delighting;
The love of Jesus, and His Name,
God’s children all uniting.
That love our theme and watchword still;
That law of love may we fulfill
And love as we are loved.

September Sixteenth

On the sixteenth of September, 1741, a “synodical conference” of the Moravian Church was in session in London, England. It consisted of ten persons, including Count Zinzendorf, his wife, his sixteen-year-old daughter, Benigna, Leonard Dober, and Spangenberg and his wife.

The meeting had been called to consider the administration of affairs during the approaching visit of Zinzendorf to America. Decisions, however, were complicated by the refusal of Dober to continue his office of Chief Elder.

That Dober found the load too heavy to be borne is not surprising. When he was solemnly installed at Herrnhut in 1735 the Unitas Fratrum was small and not widely scattered, but it had grown rapidly in six years, and the responsibility of the Chief Elder had increased accordingly.

Spangenberg gives the following statement of the duties of the Chief Elder. “All the congregations, with their choirs and institutions, all the scattered ministers and missionaries, were to be held together by him. He should know the hearts of all Brethren and Sisters belonging to the Unity of Brethren, especially of those who were laboring for the Lord inside and outside the congregation. Each member was at liberty to bring his desires to him, to tell of his needs, to seek good advice from him. He must watch that the Unity and its members
A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

stood fast in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. It was expected that he should be in prayer day and night and should bear upon his heart the welfare of the Unity and of each part thereof. In conference it was his duty to consider all that might be urged for or against any matter that was under consideration, but especially must he regard the testimony which the Holy Ghost put into his heart about it. Moreover he must be ready to give good advice to the absent Brethren and Sisters who had sent to him their suggestions.”

Dober had filled the office worthily, supported by the Lord, but finally it grew too much for him and he asked for release. Then the conference tried to find another brother who had the necessary qualifications and who had also the love and confidence of all the congregations. Several were suggested, but not one received unanimous support from members of the conference.

Finally the question was asked, “Would not the Lord our Saviour be so gracious as to accept this office for Himself? To Him alone no objection could be raised.” All members of the conference agreed that this would solve their problem and all “accepted Him with joy and deep humility.” The resignation of Dober was accepted, and his pastoral duties were divided among several others, he retaining supervision of the mission activities. A “General Conference” took over Zinzen-dorf’s administrative work.

This idea of the headship of Christ in the Church on earth was sound and scriptural, and the conception of this headship, as a supreme pastoral relation of the Chief Shepherd to His flock, which He had purchased with His own blood, had its warrant in numerous utterances of Christ and His Apostles.

By this experience the Moravian Church was saved from a spiritual popedom. It continued to function under the statement which gave it the name of Unitas Fratrum, One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. It carried with it the Moravian conception of the ministry, namely, that ministers are absolutely the property of Christ, unreservedly consecrated to His service.

September sixteenth is therefore accepted as the Covenant Day of the ministers of the Moravian Church and is so observed by them.
November Thirteenth

In 1741 there was no organized mail service; letters were transmitted by hand, through special messengers or by chance travellers.

The synodical conference which met in London in September, 1741, and there had the wonderful experience of the definite realization that the Lord Jesus Christ, by His own word, was Master, Head, Chief Elder of His Brethren, knew the length of time required to send a message to distant points. They therefore appointed November the thirteenth as the day on which simultaneous announcement should be made to all Moravian congregations of the events of September sixteenth.

In the Moravian congregations of Europe the news was received with proud emotion and humble joy. American Moravians did not hear what had happened until too late for the thirteenth of November, but on November 13, 1742, the congregation of Bethlehem observed its anniversary, with Count Zinzendorf in their midst to tell them all about it.

The anniversary of this announcement to the congregations has become one of the great festivals of the Moravian Church.

The purpose of celebrating the historical event with special services, lovefeast, and the Holy Communion, is to offer to every member the opportunity to realize that Jesus Christ is the Head and Chief Elder of the Church. He is also the Head of each individual believer, and on this day each member should consciously renew his pledge of loyalty and confirm in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper his personal fellowship with his Saviour.

Lovefeasts

The holding of lovefeasts, after the practice of the Apostolic Church, has come to be one of the outstanding customs of the Moravian Church and has proved to be a real means of grace. Christians of other denominations are attracted to Moravian lovefeasts in large numbers, and thus the spirit of fellowship and brotherhood is greatly advanced.

Lovefeasts originated in the first gathering of Christians after Pentecost. The early believers met and broke bread together, thereby
A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

signifying their union and equality. These meals of the church family were associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which followed them. They were Agapae, the Greek word for love, that is for the highest type of spiritual love. Gradually the Agapae lost their devotional character, and toward the end of the fourth century the church gave them up.

The lovefeast of Apostolic times was resuscitated in its original simplicity by the Moravian Church in 1727. After the memorable celebration of the Holy Communion on the thirteenth of August, seven groups of the participants continuing to talk over the great spiritual blessing which they had experienced, were disinclined to separate and return to their own homes for the noonday meal. Count Zinzendorf, sensing the situation, sent them food from his manor house, and each group partook together, continuing in prayer, religious conversation, and the singing of hymns. This incident reminded Zinzendorf of the primitive Agapae, and he and those to whom he spoke of the resemblance fostered the idea until lovefeasts became a custom in the Moravian life. They were introduced wherever new settlements were founded and so came to America.

Wherever its fullest liturgical development exists, the lovefeast is a service of solemn dignity, in which the finest Moravian Church hymns and stately music may be heard, but without any surrender of its central idea.

Because of its attraction for visitors persons sometimes come to a lovefeast out of curiosity, perhaps amused at the idea of "eating in church." It is interesting to watch such a person yield to the spirit of devotion which pervades the service and in a very few moments changes a visitor to a reverent member of the congregation. This never fails when the home congregation is itself full of the spirit of reverence and the spirit of brotherhood.

The lovefeast is primarily a song service, opened with prayer. Often there is no address, the hymns in the ode furnishing the subject matter for devotional thoughts. If many visitors are present, the presiding minister often says a few words, explaining the purpose of the service, just before the congregation partakes of the bun and coffee, or whatever is served. On special occasions an address may be added, giving opportunity to remind the congregation of the history of the
anniversary, or the deeper import of the day.

There is no rule as to the food to be offered, except that it be very simple and easily distributed. The drink may be coffee, tea, or lemonade, fully prepared in advance, so that it may be served very quietly and without interruption of the singing. Usually mugs are used, which may be passed from hand to hand along a pew from a tray brought along the aisle. A slightly sweetened bun, which can be served in baskets passed along the pews, is a convenient form of bread. Usually men handle the trays of mugs, and women the baskets of buns. While the congregation partakes the choir sings an anthem. Later the mugs are quietly gathered and removed. The food served is not consecrated, as in the Communion. Children and members of any denomination may partake.

There are many services during the year at which a lovefeast is appropriate, such as the festivals of the Church Year, the anniversary days of the Moravian Church, the anniversary day of a congregation, a missionary occasion, any day in fact on which there is a desire to stress the headship of the Lord and the oneness and brotherhood of His followers.

**Odes**

Odes are the orders of service prepared for use at lovefeasts. Hymn stanzas are selected which carry an appropriate thought through the entire service, making them a definite devotional feature. In the olden days the anthems to be sung by the choir were also indicated, assuring the choir's contribution to the theme of the ode.

Before the use of printing became general the odes were written, copies being made for the minister and the musicians, while the congregation, with a large store of memorized hymns, joined in at the appropriate places.

The old odes on file in the Archives of the Moravian Church have a definite historical value. When the United States celebrated the bi-centenary of the birth of George Washington there was found in the Salem Moravian Archives a copy of the ode used in Salem on February 22, 1800, when the nation mourned the death of the great and beloved ex-President and General. Research showed that from the Hymn Book of that day, and the choir anthems on file, it would be
A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

possible to reproduce this ode, and this was done as part of the Winston-Salem memorial observance.

When printing presses were established within reach of the Moravian centers, printed odes were secured for the use of the entire congregation. In North Carolina this was about 1798, when a printing press was set up in Salisbury. In Pennsylvania the date was earlier, and the work was probably done in Philadelphia.

New Year's Eve

In early days when news travelled slowly some Moravian churches made special use of New Year's Eve to review the events of the year, particularly from the standpoint of the Church.

From the diaries and other records kept during the year the minister of such a congregation would prepare the "Memorabilia", or annual summary of important items in the life of the congregation. This historical sketch was read to the congregation and then was placed on file in the Archives. These Memorabilia are of great value to historians.

The schedule of services on New Year's Eve varies in different congregations from lovefeasts to Watchnight Services.

In the Watchnight Service there is prayer, hymns are sung, and a minister makes a short address. The signal for the changing year is given by the organ or by the band which leads the congregation in singing the traditional hymn,

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices.

The Texts of the first day of January are read. Prayer is offered for the guidance of God during the new year and after another hymn the service closes with the benediction.

Daily Texts

With the beginning of each new year each Moravian family is expected to commence using the new edition of the Daily Texts of the Moravian Church.

The Moravian Church was a pioneer in the publication of a book for use in public and private daily devotions. Even today in many
countries in Europe it is the only such book available. In May, 1728, in Herrnhut, Count Zinzendorf usually held the evening service, and during that service he spoke on some selected text which he asked the people to remember and think about during the following day.

As the congregation grew and not all members were able to attend the evening service, someone was appointed to go to each home in the morning and announce the text for the day.

So long as he lived Count Zinzendorf arranged the texts, drawing them from a large collection which he gradually assembled from the Bible. In 1730 he chose in advance the texts for 1731, and they were printed in the first Text Book. This method of advance preparation has been followed ever since, except that after the death of Zinzendorf the texts were arranged by a committee instead of an individual.

From the age-old collection of texts certain leading ministers of the Moravian Church in Herrnhut, Germany, draw a Watchword for each day of the approaching year, prayer being offered that each may be a message from God to His people.

An appropriate, doctrinal Text from the New Testament is then selected to accompany each Watchword, this task being committed to some minister chosen for the purpose.

These texts are then sent to each province of the Unity and are translated into the language of the people. In many places a few lines from some hymn are added to each text to emphasize or explain the thought.

In the introductory pages of the edition published for the Moravian Church in America are to be found a Historical Preface, a statement on "Its Use in Family Worship" and the topics of the Moravian Prayer Union. In the Appendix is a Directory of Moravian ministers serving in the Moravian Church in America, retired ministers, widows of Moravian ministers and the missionaries in Alaska, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Eastern West Indies.

The Index also includes the membership of the Provincial Boards of both provinces, the church causes, a directory for the city churches, the statistics of the membership of the congregations and the mission provinces under the care of the Moravian Church in America and a summary of membership of the international Unitas Fratrum or Morav-
A CHURCH THAT REMEMBERS

vian Church.

Each province is at liberty to include in the book such additional material as may be considered desirable. In the American edition the Gospel and Epistle (Pericopes) for each Sunday are given. For other days of the week two passages of Scripture are suggested, one for morning and one for evening reading. Also included in the American edition is a prayer for each day and historical notes of such things of interest as anniversaries of the congregations and the memorial days of the church.

The Daily Texts is printed in thirteen languages for use in Europe and America and in thirteen additional languages for use in the various mission provinces. The number of readers cannot be stated even approximately, but it is widely used by members of other denominations as well as by Moravians. The good which it has done through more than two hundred years can never be estimated.

Many incidents in contemporary records, in family tradition, and in modern experience, testify to the remarkable way in which these texts fit into the daily life of their readers. One incident, recently discovered in a Unity diary of 1751, may be given as an example. The missionaries, Mack and Froelick, were passing through a Pennsylvania forest when they were alarmed by the discovery that Indians had set the woods on fire and the flames were all around them. The only chance for escape seemed to be directly forward through a defile, of which the sides were already burning. They reached safety with only some slight singeing of hair and clothing. The text for that day of deliverance was When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned (Is. 43:2).

The same text would apply to the cherished collection of texts from which the Watchwords are drawn for it came uninjured through the flames which swept Herrnhut on the last day of World War II.