

Creating a Moravian Fellowship as an Active Faith Group Within Your Church

Spring 2023

Dear Church Members, Faith Groups, and Sunday School Classes,

A Moravian Fellowship can easily be part of just about any church!

Creating a Fellowship focused Sunday School or Men's and Women's or Youth Group inside your Church is a wonderful way to partnership with the Moravian Church as a Moravian Fellowship. Remain active in your larger church family while you explore, study, and offer Moravian experiences that align with current theology and practice. There are no direct fees to start a Fellowship, just support from other Moravian Fellowship groups of like-minded Christians. You will find that there are endless study topics to enrich your faith. You can share Moravian traditions and experiences with the rest of your church such as Lovefeast celebrations, Holy Week Readings, and Easter Sunrise Liturgy.

Ecumenical Partners

The Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America shares full communion relationships with many ecumenical partners including: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church (USA). Churches in full communion do not need to agree on every doctrinal point, but are understood to have enough in common to worship together. In practice, this means that members of these denominations can easily create internal groups, a Moravian Fellowship, to seamlessly enrich you and your entire congregation.

As a Moravian Fellowship within your church, you retain full membership in your church. Dual membership means that you continue to receive sacraments, participate in the same activities as you always have, and keep your long-time friendships, while enjoying spiritual growth through Moravian experiences and traditions.

The Moravian Church of America, Southern Province wishes to offer a partnership with you and your fellow church members as you expand your Christian experiences. Through our nearly six centuries (since 1457) of existence and since the great reformation of our Church almost 300 years ago (1727), we have opened our hearts and shared our support to all those seeking to expand and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. We are willing to work with your clergy, church leadership, and you, to assist you in creating your own in-church Moravian Fellowship. Our desire is to enhance your spiritual environment, not to change you or your church.

We realize that our Christian faith must continually be nourished if it is to remain living and vital. Therefore, we desire to grow in our Christian lives through family devotions, personal prayer and study, and the opportunities for spiritual development offered by the Church. (Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, paragraph 8)

Our partnership within your church means:

Your Pastoral Care:

- You are a member of the church you love.
- You are supported and served by clergy and staff that you know.
- As a faith-based group filled with your friends – your fellow members of a Fellowship are there to pray with you and for you.
- As part of a Fellowship within your church, you are surrounded by people that know you and want to spend time with you.
- Because you can use structured curriculum for study, available from many Moravian resources, your studies will be meaningful and applicable to your daily lives.
- Meeting in a location you know (your church) and at a time (Sunday School Hour, Wednesday Night Bible Study), when the structure is already in place.
- Committee service can continue.

Your Worship and Personal Experience

- Freedom to have a say in your fellowship's experiences.
- The blending of your current worship experiences with Moravian traditions as desired.
- How you gather, what you study, and the way you engage is up to you and the group.
- Scripture is revealed to everyone through our actions.
- Music you know from the Moravian Book of Worship, other hymnals, including readings, seasonal celebrations, and more are available to enrich your spiritual experience.
- Your Fellowship can introduce Moravian traditions such as Lovefeast celebrations, Holy Week Readings, Easter Sunrise Liturgy service to the rest of your congregation.
- Missions opportunities are part of the Fellowship, managed by the group, and are an important part of the Moravian Church.

As an in-church Moravian Fellowship

- Fellowships pay no annual fees (Provincial Share, aka apportionments) to receive support from the Moravian Church of America, Southern Province and fellow Moravian groups.
- In-church Fellowships meet at the church, online, and other sites welcoming to the group.
- In-church Fellowships fall under governance of their church with support from the Moravian Province and the Global Moravian Unity.
- In-church Fellowships may send delegates to Provincial Synods (conferences) by invitation.
- In-church Fellowships may be the size of a few people or as large as a hundred or more members.
- Opt-out, should your church or group wish to take another path, leaving a Moravian Fellowship may be done by letter of intent to end the Fellowship.

As Moravians we are here to support you and your church, to provide strength, and to care for everyone - we will never judge you.

We are happy to meet with you, to listen to your vision and desires, to discuss the advantages of partnering with the Moravian Church, and to provide access to resources to better inform you and your church on the benefits and possibilities.

A partnership as an in-church Moravian Fellowship has the potential to provide an enriching experience for you and your church as it brings comfort and familiarity to your personal worship experiences and beyond.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Routh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Neil" and last name "Routh" clearly distinguishable.

Rev. Dr. Neil Routh
President, Provincial Elders' Conference
Moravian Church in America, Southern Province

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew". The signature is cursive and includes a long, sweeping horizontal flourish at the end.

Andrew (Andy) Fulp
Member: Wilmington Island UMC
and Savannah Moravian Fellowship