

BWM NEWS

As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” John 20:21b

First Cuba Synod

In the midst of the aftermath of the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma, the Cuban Moravian Mission Province celebrated its first official Synod in Havana, September 25-28. Gathered at the Catholic Diocese Center in Havana, a testament to the ecumenical spirit and good relations of the Cuban Moravian Church, were 68 voting delegates and 11 observers from 7 districts across the island.



A primary task of the synod was a revision of its Book of Order to reflect its new status as a Mission Province. Outgoing President, the Rev. Armando Rusindo, noted



Moravian Disaster Response

The Board of World Mission has been extremely busy trying to keep up with the widespread damage caused by the numerous disasters over the last six weeks or so. They have included multiple Category 5 Hurricanes, earthquakes in Mexico, and wildfires across the Western United States.

To begin the BWM thanks the generous members of our congregations who have offered support through prayer, financial gifts, and a readiness to volunteer when the time was right. A brief update on the work of Moravian Disaster Response (MDR) is offered here, but we invite you to stay up to date by liking our Facebook page (search Moravian Board of World Mission) or visiting our website (www.MoravianMission.org).

Hurricane Harvey

To this point the BWM has forwarded financial support to the Unity of the Brethren Church in Texas (spiritual cousins of the Moravian Church). An MDR trailer has also been sent to Texas,

CUBA (continued)

that the church was in the process of “institutionalizing” its many ministries, with structures established for a provincial youth department to support the local youth groups. The Rev. Tania Sanchez (Havana) was elected president



of the new Provincial Board, with the other 4 members representing the districts of Havana, Mayabeque, Holguin and Camaguey. An emotional and historic moment occurred when the Rev. Armando Rusindo (on right below) who



has led the development of this church since 1997, was elected as a bishop of the Moravian Unity. When consecrated he will be the 365th bishop and the first Hispanic bishop of the Worldwide Moravian Church. Our prayers continue for the Moravian Church in Cuba as it moves forward in ministry.

filled with supplies collected and donated by congregations in Southern Wisconsin. This trailer of supplies and tools are already being put to work, and will be available for use by Moravian teams looking to travel in the near future.



To this end, the final two weeks of October, and first two weeks of November are being targeted for an initial "blitz" to help with cleanup and beginning the rebuilding process. If you have interest in joining a team in this timeframe,

please email Justin@MoravianMission.org. At this time, housing is limited, and the first teams will be filled based on the needed skills and a first come - first to serve basis.

Hurricane Irma and Maria

Congregations in Florida reported relatively little damage, and at this time no teams are being planned to be organized by the BWM, though we will continue to monitor the long term need, and opportunities to partner with other organizations to send willing volunteers.

The majority of the MDR response to these Hurricanes so far has been limited based on the severity of the situation prohibiting a full assessment of the need. However, the BWM has sent initial financial support to both the Moravian Church in Cuba, and to the Eastern West Indies Province (EWIP). The Moravian Church in Cuba has just completed its first Synod as a Mission Province of the Moravian Church, and representatives of the BWM and Armando Rusindo Mission Foundation were present to help assess the situation through communication with church leaders. A team will be traveling to Cuba from the Southern Province later in October, and their initial work plans have changed a bit and now will be helping to respond to this disaster.

Information about the extent of the damage in the EWIP is still forthcoming as airports have just begun to open up. However, we do know the Moravian Church office on Antigua has been an emergency housing situation for several families evacuated from Barbuda. The BWM sent financial assistance to the EWIP to help with this effort and the beginning of the rebuilding efforts. Rev. Cortroy Jarvis, Chair of the EWIP, reports that while they still have much to assess "the Emmaus

MDR (continued)

Moravian Church and manse on St. John were destroyed, and Bethany Moravian Church (also on St. John) has lost much of its roof. More damage has also been incurred on St. Croix and St. Thomas. Rev. Jarvis is planning to visit these areas as possible this week, and will provide pictures and a full assessment upon completion of the visit.

Please to consider further financial contributions as the BWM looks to respond as best we can, and as quickly as possible as needs become apparent.



Representing the Northern, Southern, & Alaska Provinces,
& the Unity of Brethren in Texas

www.moravianmission.org