Prayer
Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20
Hymn: 650 "Shepherd of Souls, Refresh"

Next to the English the Germans were the largest national group in colonial America. The Germans who came to America belonged to a number of different religious groups. The main ones were: Mennonites, Amish, Dunkers, Ephrataites, Quakers, Moravians, Schwenkfelders, German Reformed, and Lutherans.

THE MORAVIANS

The most significant of the German pietistic sects transplanted in America was the Moravian Brethren, also known as the Unitas Fratrum or Unity of the Brethren. The Moravians traced themselves back to the preaching of John Huss in the early fifteenth century. After the Catholics had crushed the Hussites a remnant in 1457 formed a Christian association within the national church, under the leadership of Gregory, nephew of the Primate Rokycana. The little group secured permission to settle on an estate at Lititz near the eastern frontier of Bohemia. Persecution by the Catholics led this group and other remnants of the Hussites to hold a Synod at Lhota near Reichenau in 1467, where they resolved to form a separated church. Three of their number were set apart and ordained by priests who had joined their movement. They requested and received episcopal consecration from Bishop Stephen of the Austrian Waldenses. Bishop Stephen traced his ordination to Catholic bishops at the Council of Basel. Michael Bradacius, who had received the episcopate from Bishop Stephen, re-ordained the three who had received the presbyterial ordination.

The Unitas Fratrum spread in Bohemia and Moravia. By the time of the Protestant Reformation they had about four hundred parishes with a membership of about two hundred thousand. They had their own confession of faith, catechism, hymn-books, and evangelical literature printed by two of their own printing houses. They maintained warm and sympathetic relations with both German and Swiss reformers.

In 1549 Ferdinand I initiated a fierce persecution that drove most of the Brethren out of Bohemia and Moravia. They sought refuge in Poland and East Prussia. After Frederick II's victory at White Mountain in 1620, his Counter-Reformation forces sought to completely blot out the Unitas Fratrum in both Bohemia and Moravia. A few secret adherents within their own families maintained the doctrine and rites while outwardly conforming to Roman Catholicism. In 1656, Lissa, the main center of the Brethren in Poland was put to the torch and the Brethren that escaped scattered. Bishop John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) found refuge in Holland. With great diligence Bishop Comenius, until his death in 1670, kept in touch with the "Hidden Seed", as he called the scattered remnants, and kept a very small remnant alive and loyal. With great care episcopal ordination was kept alive and unbroken.

Early in the 1700's, Christian David, a young carpenter who had served in the army of Frederick William I, became a leader among the "Hidden Seed." David had been born at Senftleben, in Moravia, in 1690. In 1717 he consecrated himself to the work of an evangelist among the "Hidden Seed," visiting the scattered Moravians. At Sehelen he met five brothers named Neisser, whose grandfather, George Jäschke, had been a patriarch among the Brethren. David and the
Neissers heard of a young nobleman in Saxony, Nicolaus Ludwig, Count von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), who welcomed persecuted peoples to his large estate. In 1722 David travelled to Saxony and requested permission for the persecuted Moravians to flee to his estate for a temporary refuge. Zinzendorf remembered how his own fathers had had to flee from Austria from persecution and the young Lutheran nobleman granted the request of the Moravians.

Christian David returned to Moravia, reaching Sehlen on May 25, 1722. Two night later, David, Augustin and Jacob Neisser, with their families, ten souls in all, left Sehlen secretly in the darkness, leaving almost all possessions behind. They travelled on foot, carrying twins twelve weeks old and a little girl of three.

Heitz, Zinzendorf's manager, allowed the Moravians to build homes in an unreclaimed wilderness on the estate, near the highway from Lobau to Zittau, half-hour's walk from the village of Berthelsdorf, the center of the estate and site of the Lutheran church. The Moravians called their little settlement "Herrnhut" (House of the Lord).

Zinzendorf had been educated at Halle under the Pietist leader, Franke. He had studied law at Wittenberg. He held a high government office at Dresden. He devoted much of his free time to Pietistic meetings. He wanted to make his estate a center of true Pietistic Lutheranism. He welcomed persecuted people of all kinds. He took a great interest in the Moravians. In 1724 he decided to erect a school at Herrnhut, modeled after the Paedagogium at Halle. On May 12, 1724, the very day the foundation of the school was laid, five young Moravians on their way to Poland stopped to visit the Neissers. They were so impressed with what they saw at Herrnhut they decided to stay.

Exiles continued to pour into Herrnhut. More Moravians came. Many others of various types came, among them in 1726 several families of Schwenkfelders from Silesia. In the spring of 1727 Zinzendorf resigned his office in Dresden to devote himself to his estate. He had taken great interest in the history of the Moravians. On August 13, 1727, a very memorable celebration of the Lord's Supper at the parish church at Berthelsdorf, was interpreted as a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Zinzendorf sought to mold his refugees into a model Pietistic community. He had expected it to be Lutheran but more and more he was attracted by the Moravian ways. At Herrnhut he became the leader of a movement more Moravian than Lutheran. It became distinct from Berthelsdorf. He formulated a constitution, statutes and discipline that were a combination of the Unitas Fratrum and his own Pietism. Herrnhut became an educational center for teachers, preachers, and missionaries. Herrnhut became a center of foreign missions. In 1732 David Nitschmann and Leonard Dober began a mission in the West Indies among the negroes of St. Thomas. In 1733 Christian David and two cousins named Stach went to Greenland. In 1733 a mission was opened at St. Croix. In 1734 Moravians went to Lapland and missionaries were sent to Georgia in North America and to Surinam in South America.

The work of Herrnhut attracted the attention of Daniel Ernst Jablonski, court preacher in Berlin, one of the surviving bishops of the Unitas Fratrum. He became convinced that the exiled at Herrnhut were the rightful representatives of the "Hidden Seed" of the ancient evangelical church of Bohemia and Moravia. He urged the transfer of the episcopate to them. In 1735, with the consent of Sitkovius, the other surviving bishop, who was superintendent of
of the Reformed congregations in Poland, Jablonski consecrated David Nitschmann of Herrnhut, missionary back from the West Indies, at Berlin.

Zinzendorf found it impossible to integrate the disputatious Schwenkfelders with the community at Herrnhut and therefore did not want to keep them permanently on his estate. When he heard of the colony Colonel James Oglethorpe had established in Georgia he began negotiations for a heaven for the Schwenkfelders in Georgia. Through Herr Von Pfeil, ambassador of Würtemberg-at-Ratisbon, he received from the trustees of the colony of Georgia promise of land and free passage. The Schwenkfelders left Herrnhut in May, 1734, under the lead of George Wiegener. Accompanying the Schwenkfelders was an itinerant evangelist of the Moravians, George Bönisch, who planned to work as a missionary among the Indians. After leaving Herrnhut the Schwenkfelders changed their plans and went to Pennsylvania instead of to Georgia. Bönisch became the first Moravian missionary to the Indians in Pennsylvania.

When Zinzendorf learned that the Schwenkfelders had abandoned their plan to occupy the land in Georgia he secured permission for Moravians to occupy the land in order to begin missions among the Cherokee and Creek Indians. Zinzendorf was aware that there was rising hostility in Germany to his work at Herrnhut and should persecution become too great or should the Moravians be expelled from Germany Georgia might provide a place of refuge. Governor Oglethorpe promised the Moravians five hundred acres for the church and fifty additional acres for Zinzendorf’s negotiator, August Gottlieb Spangenberg, on the site of what would become Savannah. On April 7, 1735, a group of nine Moravians, under the leadership of Spangenberg, arrived in Georgia. The next year twenty more Moravians arrived on the same ship that brought the High Anglican, John Wesley, to serve as chaplain to Governor Oglethorpe, and to work among the colonists and Indians. Wesley left in his Journal a memorable picture of his impressions of the Moravians—their great fearless faith in the storm on the ocean.

Spangenberg established friendly relations with Chief Tomotschatchi which opened the way for mission work among the Indians. On February 28, 1736, Bishop Nitschmann, solemnly ordained Anton Seiffert pastor of the Moravian colony. John Wesley was present at the service and recorded in his Journal that the service carried his thoughts back to the primitive church. Two weeks after the ordination Spangenberg left for Pennsylvania to take the place of Bönisch.

In 1738, Archbishop Potter, of Canterbury, granted permission for the Moravians, Peter Böhler, George Schuilius, and young David Zeisberger, to begin a mission among the negro slaves near Purysburg, South Carolina. Schuilius died of fever the next summer. Böhler, after almost succumbing, went to Savannah, where he found the colony sadly dwindled, from fevers and persecution because the Moravians refused to bear arms against the Spanish of Florida. Some had died. Some had returned to Europe and some had fled to Germantown. When George Whitefield made his second visit to Georgia in 1740, he offered the remnant of the colony free passage to Pennsylvania. The Moravians accepted his kindness, hoping to rejoin Spangenberg, and also to find Bishop Nitschmann. They had heard that a Moravian synod at Marienborn near Frankfort-on-the-Main, in November, 1739, had commissioned Bishop Nitschmann to lead a band of Moravians to Pennsylvania. When the little remnant arrived at Germantown, Spangenburg had left for Europe and Nitschmann and his band had not arrived.

On May 5, 1740, Whitefield, who had arranged to buy 5,000 acres from William Allen of Philadelphia, to found a school for negroes and a village
for destitute Englishmen, proposed to Bohler that the Moravians do the woodwork on his buildings and that Bohler supervise the whole building project.

Whitefield named the village in the wilderness, Nazareth. By fall doctrinal differences between Bohler and Whitefield over Whitefield's Calvinism, provoked Whitefield to dismiss the Moravians and to order them off his land. He finally consented for them to remain at Nazareth until spring because of the early arrival of winter.

Andrew Eschenbach arrived at Nazareth with the news that Nitschmann was on his way. Nitschmann with his band of Moravians arrived in December, 1740, empowered to purchase land and to begin a settlement. They spent the winter at Nazareth. Nitschmann began negotiations with William Allen to purchase 500 acres at the juncture of the Lehigh and the Monocacy Rivers. The first log cabin was erected before the negotiations were completed. Böhler was recalled to Europe. Before he departed news came that the Moravians could buy the Nazareth tract of land. Whitefield was in financial difficulties. Seward who had loaned him the money to buy the tract had died and Whitefield was unable to settle with the executors of the estate. Whitefield helped arrange for Spangenberg and Bohler to buy the Nazareth tract also. In April, 1741, the Moravians completed negotiations to purchase both tracts of land. More Moravian missionaries arrived in the Fall.

In the meantime Zinzendorf had conceived of great plans for promoting Christian Unity among the various denominations, both in Europe and in America, and of enlarged mission work throughout the world. Zinzendorf still considered himself a Lutheran. To qualify for ordination he submitted himself to the examiners of the University of Greifswald and to the examiners of the theological faculty of Tübingen (December 19, 1734) and received favorable testimonials from them. Frederick William I of Prussia commissioned a special committee of Lutheran divines to examine Zinzendorf in theology and they submitted a favorable report. Archbishop Potter of Canterbury joined Frederick William I in recommending that Zinzendorf be consecrated a bishop of the Moravians by Jablonski and Nitschmann, the Moravian bishops, who so consecrated him in 1737. Already in 1736 Zinzendorf had been banished from Saxony without notification of charges or process of trial. Word had spread through Saxony that his estate had become a haven for religious fanatics.

Zinzendorf used his exile as an opportunity for mission work. He travelled incognito using a secondary family name, Louis Tünneisen. He visited Moravian missions in many places. He preached and exhorted in Frankford-on-the-Main, Berlin, Livonia, Holland, Switzerland, the Danish West Indies, and London. At the Moravian Synod at Marienborn in July 1741, he resigned his Moravian episcopate temporarily with a view to making a journey to Pennsylvania under the name of Domine de Tünneisen. He thought that under that name he would have a better chance to break down the walls of denominationalism in Pennsylvania. On December 2, 1741 he arrived in New York. He reached Philadelphia on December 10. He reached his Brethren on December 21. At the celebration of the Nativity on Christmas Eve he named their settlement Bethlehem. Bethlehem and Nazareth became the leading centers of the Moravians in Pennsylvania.

It has been estimated that by the time Zinzendorf arrived in Pennsylvania already some 100,000 Germans had settled in Pennsylvania. In Europe Zinzendorf and the Moravians had received reports that thousands of these Germans lived without worship of any kind. Many heads of families had never been baptized. Children were being brought up without any knowledge of Christianity. The sects that had been hated and persecuted in Europe were growing in Pennsylvania, and even new and wilder ones were springing up. The Lutherans and Reformed had
organized only a few parishes and most of them were without pastors. Neither Lutherans nor Reformed had taken much interest in the Germans in America. It was the reports of the sad state of the German settlers and Indians that had brought Bönish to Pennsylvania in 1734 and Spangenberg in 1736. Spangenberg had sought to minister to the Germans scattered in the various communions. He had regularly held services in the home of the Schwenkfelder, Christopher Wiegner. He had gathered earnest spirits from the various communions into a conference known as "The Associated Brethren of Skippack." This association met monthly to discuss how to minister to all the scattered Germans. The monthly meetings were maintained until 1740. Spangenberg's reports to the Europeans of the deplorable religious condition of the Germans in Pennsylvania had prompted the sending of Bishop Nitschmann's group of missionaries to the itinerate among the Germans. Christian Henry Rauch had been sent to evangelize the Indians.

Zinzendorf had come with a threefold purpose: (1) to preach Christianity to the thousands who knew nothing of it; (2) to gather those who hungered for Christian worship and fellowship into congregations; (3) to convert the Indians and to establish schools for their education. He had a larger dream of forming an evangelical alliance of all the German Protestants in Pennsylvania. He came to the task not as a Moravian bishop but as a free servant of Christ. That was why he did not want to be known as either a count or as a bishop. He wanted to break down the walls of denominationalism. Zinzendorf did not highly value creeds and theological arguments. His emphasis was on a genuine conversion experience and a warm devotional life and unselfish Christian service. He emphasized God's love for man revealed in Christ with special emphasis on the passion of Christ. He believed that all Christians could unite on the Augsburg Confession of the Lutherans because he believed it contained the universal faith of all Protestants. He maintained that in every religion there were truths of God that could not be found in any other religion. No one religion had all the truth. He wanted to take the truth from all the denominations to form a whole that would belong to all. When Zinzendorf arrived none of the German denominations was fully organized.

After his brief visit with the Moravians at Bethlehem, Zinzendorf went to Germantown where he preached in the Reformed church on the last day of the year. Henry Antes, a member of the Reformed church who lived in Frederick township had issued from his home a circular on December 15 calling for a general conference of all German groups to meet in Germantown to peacefully discuss the articles of faith and how they all might promote mutual love and forbearance. The conference met in Germantown in the home of Theobald Enten, January 1-3, 1742. It was led by Antes. Zinzendorf stayed in the home of John Bechtel and threw himself into the conference with all his energy. It was the first of seven conferences or synods held within six months and in which Zinzendorf began to take the lead. Over a hundred Germans attended the first four conferences. They represented all the German religious groups in Pennsylvania. After the fourth meeting all the groups withdrew except the Lutherans, the Reformed, and the Moravians. The second conference or synod was held at Falkner's Swamp, January 14th; the third at Oley, February 10th; and the fourth at Germantown, March 10th. The last three were held as follows: the fifth at Germantown, April 6th; the sixth at Philadelphia, May 6th; and the seventh at Philadelphia on June 1st.

Instead of promoting harmony and unity the conferences had intensified the sectarian differences and confusion. Zinzendorf had proposed the forming
of a "Church of God in the Spirit" made up of all the groups. The various German groups misunderstood his proposal. They thought he was proposing an organic union with an overhead authority. They considered it a devious scheme to promote Moravianism and to bring all under Zinzendorf's control. Lutherans were offended at his emphasis on the passion of Christ. Most were offended at the constant use of Moravian hymns, and the use of the lot. The hymns and the lot were considered Moravian propaganda. They found Zinzendorf's domineering personality offensive. Many were offended at his emotional nature that often expressed itself without due restraint. The feelings of most was later expressed by Gilbert Tennent in his condemnation of Zinzendorf's sermons as a "bundle of contradictions and nonsense, damnable errors and heresies interspersed with passages of truth and sense." The last three meetings attended by Moravians, Lutherans and the Reformed were equally disappointing to Zinzendorf.

The Lutherans in Philadelphia worshiped in a barn on Arch Street. They had been unable to secure a pastor. In January they had requested Zinzendorf to become their pastor. He entered their pulpit only after ascertaining that Pastor Böhme of the Reformed congregation in Wispens, who had been preaching for Lutherans once a month, had no objection. The Vorsteher or officers of the Lutheran congregation in February requested Zinzendorf to administer communion to the congregation. He asked them to give the matter further consideration but finally held a preparatory service on Palm Sunday and then administered communion on Easter Sunday according to the Lutheran ritual. The congregation repeated its call to him to become pastor. On May 15th at the home of the governor and in the presence of some of the most prominent men of the colony Zinzendorf formally renounced his hereditary rank of count and on May 26 became the pastor of the Lutherans. He appointed Christopher Pyrläus, a divinity student from Leipzig to be his assistant. Zinzendorf also ministered to the Reformed congregation in Philadelphia at their request. He recommended to the Tulpehocken church Gottlieb Büttner to be their pastor. When this did not work out he recommended Philip Andrew Meurer who had studied at Jena.

Zinzendorf did not last long in the Lutheran church in Philadelphia. Strife arose in the congregation over the preaching of Pyrläus, the assistant. Zinzendorf withdrew and built his own stone church on Race Street--it became the first Moravian Church in Philadelphia.

The Lutherans in Germany became aroused over the reports that the Moravian Zinzendorf was about to lead all the Lutherans into the Moravian Church. The aroused Lutherans sent Henry M. Muhlenberg to minister to the Lutherans and to put an end to Moravian inroads among Lutherans. Up to this point the Lutherans of Germany had shown little interest in sending preachers and teachers to Pennsylvania.

On June 7th while the seventh Pennsylvania Synod was meeting, a colony of Moravians under the leadership of Peter Böhler arrived in Philadelphia. They were known as the "First Sea Congregation" because on shipboard the fifty-seven Moravians had organized as a congregation. They had maintained services during the long voyage. They were headed for Nazareth and Bethlehem to strengthen the colonies there. Zinzendorf took the lead in organizing congregations on the Moravian model on June 25th.

During the latter half of Zinzendorf's thirteen month stay in America he helped organize half a dozen other congregations. Much of his last six months was devoted to mission work among the Indians. His first mission among the
Indians lasted from June 24th to August 2nd and took him to the Blue Mountains and the Upper Schuylkill where he preached to the Minnisinks and the Aquanashicola. During this period he had an interview with the chiefs of the Six Nations of the Iroquois at the home of Conrad Weiss, the Indian agent for the government, in Heidelberg. Zinzendorf received permission from the chiefs for the Moravian Brethren to work among the Iroquois and their dependents. His second tour which lasted from August 10th to August 31st was to the Mohican town of Shekomeko, twenty miles southeast of Rhinebeck, N.Y., where Rauch had been laboring since 1740. Rauch's first converts had been baptized at Olney during the third Pennsylvania Synod in February, 1741. On August 22nd Zinzendorf organized a congregation of ten Indian Christians at Shekomeko. His third journey, lasting from September 24th to November 9th, was to the Indian town of Shamokin in Pennsylvania. Zinzendorf was the first white to preach to these Indians in the Wyoming Valley but his effort was largely wasted because of the secret hostility of his interpreter, Madam Montour.

During his last two months in America Zinzendorf made long range plans for the Moravian Church. Bishop David Nitschmann was appointed to oversee the mission work among the Indians. Peter Böhler, assisted by Seiffert, was given oversight of the itinerant ministry among the scattered Moravians. Zinzendorf during his stay had taken the lead in founding or greatly strengthening seven congregations in Pennsylvania and two in New York. (The congregations in Pennsylvania were: Bethlehem, Nazareth, Philadelphia, Hebron, Heidelberg, Lancaster, and York. The congregations in New York were in New York City and on Staten Island.) He founded four schools, located in Germantown, Fredericktown, Oley, and Heidelberg. On January 9, 1742 Zinzendorf sailed for Europe.

Following Zinzendorf's departure the Moravians at Bethlehem launched an extensive mission campaign, dividing the membership of some 120 into those who would go and those who would labor to provide support. Nazareth joined the effort. In December, 1744 Bishop Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg arrived from Herrnhut to supervise the work in America—both the Indian work and the work of the itinerants and the congregations. He had been educated under Buddaeus at Jena and was an able theologian and linguist. He had become a Moravian under the teaching of Andrew Beier in 1733. He was a man of great wisdom and sound judgment, of tremendous energy and indefatigable industry, of great foresight, and a man of wide experience in mission work. He was respected as a person of the highest principles and great sincerity. In order to support the growing mission work he organized Bethlehem and Nazareth into the "Great Economy." He worked out a series of sixteen rules based on the experience at Herrnhut. He divided the members into groups called choirs: a single men choir, a single women choir, an older boy choir, an older girl choir, and a married couples choir. Each choir had its own house. Large farms were established with large granaries. Large herds of cattle were developed. Numerous industries were established. All wealth belonged to the "Unity of the Brethren." The American Moravians supported the communities, the American missions, and made large contributions to help the European Brethren. By 1759 they had 2,454 acres under extensive cultivation. They owned thousands of livestock. They had erected 97 buildings including 17 choir houses, 5 schools, 20 buildings for trades, 5 mills, 2 inns, and 48 farm buildings. Over 100 trades were practised in the two communities. In 1755 there were 300 children in the various schools with some 80 teachers.

Spangenberg returned to Herrnhut in 1746 and stayed until 1750/51. A wild fanaticism arose among the Moravians. They carried to the extreme language and ideas of Zinzendorf. He had tried to picture the blood and wounds of Christ
in terms that would melt the hardest of hearts. He had compared the relation
of the believer to Christ in terms of conjugal relationship. The soul was
female and the believer was married to "one conjugal Lord Jesus." The Lord's
Supper was called the "embrace." In speech and in hymns the Moravians carried
the idea of the marriage relationship to sentimental and sensuous extremes
that to outsiders seemed very abnormal. On Spangenberg's return he checked
the fanaticism.

On Zinzendorf's return to Europe he began a long stay in London in an
effort to establish English Moravian churches. He continued to oversee the
work in both Europe and America. He considered all church problems and debts
his own personal responsibility. He spent his wealth and his strength most
unselfishly and unsparingly. In response to and out of respect for his work,
especially in England, the English parliament with the encouragement of
Archbishop Potter of Canterbury, formally recognized the Unitas Fratrum as an
ancient Protestant Episcopal church with special rights in English territories.
This proved a great encouragement and help to missionaries in territories where
the Anglican church was established.

In 1745 the General Synod at Marienborn recognized that the attempts to
end denominational division were futile and adopted regulations to strengthen
the Moravians as a visible church. For both Europe and America the Synod
provided for a ministry of three orders (bishop, presbyters, and deacons) and
a Moravian ritual. In October, 1748, the twenty-seventh Pennsylvania Synod
met in Bethlehem but was publicly recognized as the First Synod of the Moravian
Church in America. They were giving up Zinzendorf's dream of uniting all
denominations. The Moravians would concentrate on building their own. At the
time there were thirty-one congregations exclusive of the missions among the
Indians.

In 1749 Spangenberg began negotiations with Lord Granville for the purchase
of lands in North Carolina. In August, 1752 Spangenberg, Antes, and several
others left Bethlehem on horseback for North Carolina. In May, 1753 they
concluded negotiations with Lord Granville for the purchase of a tract named
"Wachovia" after lands belonging to the Zinzendorf family in Austria. On
instructions from Lord Granville, Governor Dupp recognized Wachovia as a special
diocese of the Moravian Brethren. Settlement was begun on November 17, 1753
with Bernard Adam Grube as minister and Jacob Lüsch as business manager. John
Jacob Fries followed Grube as minister.

In 1756 the Moravians founded a new settlement in Pennsylvania that they
named Lititz after the first home of the Unitas Fratrum. George Klein donated
491 acres to the church. It became the permanent residence of Bishop Hehl.

Moravian missionaries had established missions in every colony and territory
from Maine to Georgia. The increasing prosperity of the church made it possible
to abolish the "Economy." As the number of families had increased discontent
with a communal living had grown. There was growing criticism of removing
children from their mothers to place them in nurseries, and later removing them
to the boys' or girls' choirs. By 1760 the demand for family privacy became so
insistent that some of the buildings were turned into family apartments. In
1762 the "Economy" was abolished. Membership in the community continued to be
based on membership in the Moravian Church but the farms and industries became
private enterprises.
The Moravians had continued very effective work among the Indians until the French and Indian Wars. Because of their refusal to bear arms against the French the Moravians were accused of being in league with the French. Pagan Indians in league with the French made savage raids on the pacifist Moravian Indians. Legislation was passed denying the Moravians the right to give religious instruction to the Indians. The Moravians had to remove their missionaries from Shekomeko. They began a mission at Gnadenhütten on the Mahoning and had soon established a congregation of about 500 Indians. In November, 1755, hostile pagan Indians raided the mission and massacred all but four of the congregation.

After the war the Moravians renewed their mission work. David Zeisberger, one of the most famous and most effective of their missionaries, established Friedenshütten (Tents of Peace) on the northern branch of the Susquehanna. Additional missions were established on the left bank of the Allegheny and on the Susquehanna. Persecution by unconverted Indians forced Zeisberger and fellow missionaries to move west to Ohio in 1770. They settled along the Tuscarawas River. They founded the villages of Schönbrunn, Gnadenhütten, Lichtenau, and Salem. The missionaries enjoyed great success in Ohio in winning Indians to Christianity and in introducing an unusual degree of civilization. Log huts were replacing tents.

The American Revolution brought great suffering to the Moravians. Pacifist Indians were butchered by both Americans and British. Many Moravian buildings were requisitioned by the armies. The colonies levied a heavy tax on men who would not fight. Moravians responded cheerfully to the requisitioning of supplies and paid the taxes.

After the war as Indian tribes were moved westward, the Moravian missionaries chose to go with the Indians and to share their sufferings. Often the missionaries suffered martyrdom at the hands of both whites and pagan Indians.

As long as Zinzendorf lived, in the last resort the affairs of the Moravians in both Europe and America rested on him. In 1754 a Board of Administration was appointed to help in the oversight. In 1756 the Synod replaced the first board with a Board of Directors. Later that year on May 9 Zinzendorf died after a brief illness. He had sacrificed rank, wealth, and joys of home for the cause. He will always rank as one of the great leaders of church history. His debts that he had accumulated in caring for the Unitas Fratrum amounted to $773,162.00. The Moravian Brethren gave Zinzendorf's heirs $90,000 for his estate and assumed the debt.

In 1775 the Moravians in America numbered about 3,000 with 2,500 of them in Pennsylvania. They had remained a small group. Zinzendorf's ecumenical dreams and efforts had turned many against the Moravians. Their stand against bearing arms had made them most unpopular in both French and Indian Wars and in the Revolution. Once they had abandoned the ecumenical dreams they had become closed communities that did not mingle with the larger world. The fact that the leadership and control had remained in Europe had proved a limiting factor. At a time when democracy was growing in America the Synod in Europe moved more and more to reduce the role of the local congregation in the affairs of the Unitas Fratrum.
Though they remained small the Moravians did much to bring an awakening to the responsibility for mission work. Through their contacts with John and Charles Wesley they exercised a large influence on the Methodist Movement. The hymnology of the Moravians exercised a lasting influence on the hymnology of Protestant churches.