

Memorabilia of 2002

So 2002 was a bad year, eh? Take another look around, for progress has indeed been made.

Provincial Synod — our first quadrennial synod — was held April 17-21 at Black Mountain, N.C. It re-elected Betsy Bombick and Tom Shelton to PEC with Bob Sawyer re-elected as its president. Rick Sides and Donna Hurt were elected to succeed Lane Sapp and George Johnson, whose terms on PEC were expiring. Amid other elections and resolutions, Synod found its greatest sense of unity in worship services, which were in a variety of styles.

On the congregational side, **New Beginnings** in Huntersville, N.C., opened its charter on February 17 and quickly reached full church status in the Southern Province on May 19. Purchase of its property was completed on December 11, and construction will begin in a couple of years. **New Covenant**, worshipping for now in Hypoluxo south of Palm Beach, Fla., achieved fellowship status. The joining of **Immanuel** with **New Eden** in southeast Winston-Salem on October 7 formed the new congregation of **Immanuel-New Eden**.

Several of our Southern Province churches have undertaken major construction projects. On May 5 **Trinity** celebrated the completion of its sprucing up. That's a \$1.2 million sprucing up, which has given the church facilities a fresh new look while retaining much of the beautiful old character. **Mayodan** also underwent major renovation of its sanctuary and dedicated the completed work on November 10. **Fairview** spruced up with painting, new tile in the lovefeast kitchen, a flagpole and surrounding area, a repaired air conditioner, and a new \$30,000 roof. **Raleigh's** renovations consisted of new brick walkways, a new sign, and new handicapped accessible entries to the sanctuary and fellowship hall. **Kernersville** continues installation work on its new organ. Work proceeds at its own pace here since the organ has a tracker system which must be handcrafted. **Home Church** renovated the third floor of its Christian education building. That sounds simple enough. But toss in current fire and building codes, and the cost was "dramatically affected." The most extensive construction is at **Bethania**, where additions to the current buildings include restrooms, kitchen, office, entrance, and classrooms. A driveway from Bethania-Rural Hall Road was made, and a new parking lot was laid out. And the creek was moved out of the way. As one member put it, the construction is "writing a new page of history for Bethania Moravian Church."

While some churches have completed their renovation and improvement projects, other churches are looking to the future. **Olivet** raised \$250,087.50 to buy 15.39 acres that adjoin the church property. The purchase guarantees the opportunity for church growth for many years to come. Phase one of **Messiah's** master plan calls for a new fellowship hall, removal of the parsonage from the grounds, reworking the parking lot, and moving the playground closer to the preschool. Though **Unity**, like many churches in this economic downturn, is struggling to meet its budget, it has received a four-phase plan for a new building and renovations. **Covenant** is studying ways and means of replacing its fellowship hall and adjoining trailer with a larger, more functional facility. **Konnoak Hills** has in hand plans for sanctuary renovation with lighting and sound. Finally, **Ardmore's** space analysis team has reported the need for more space. Suggestions for providing the space include a capital campaign and "development of a second congregation."

A number of anniversaries were observed. **Trinity** had its 90th in its present location (though its predecessor Centerville dates back to 1886). **Immanuel** celebrated its anniversary on the very day it began 90 years earlier: October 6. It was a bitter-sweet occasion, for it marked the final service of Immanuel. The next day, October 7, was the first day for a new congregation in the Southern Province as **Immanuel** joined **New Eden** to form Immanuel-New Eden. **Mount Bethel** up in the Virginia highlands celebrated its 150th anniversary on November 16, and **Bethabara** opened a year-long

celebration of its 250th anniversary — which also happens to be the 250th anniversary of the Southern Province, duly noted in a “birthday party” held at Bethabara on September 28 as a beginning of the year of celebration.

As part of the 250th anniversary, *With Courage for the Future* was published in September. Weighing in at four pounds and 950 pages (including preface material), *With Courage* is worth every ounce and paragraph with a lively — and accurate — telling of the story of the Southern Province. It is, as noted by the Northern Province archivist, the longest single publication on the Moravian Church. (And, we might add, well worth the reading.)

Yes, we can dwell on all the misfortunes and missed opportunities, We can beat ourselves to death with our shortcomings. But isn't it better to take heart with examples of courage and achievement? Don't we do more when we have good examples to follow? Yes, we can do more, especially when relying on Edward Rondthaler's words: Let's do it together!

* * *

Are things tight? Of course they are. Just ask any Board of Trustees member. For 2003 **Kernersville**'s Trustees presented two budgets to Church Council, one “balanced,” one “faith.” Council overwhelmingly approved the “faith” budget. That means that each member must dig deeper, but it is still a positive decision. One thing is certain. If you lower your sights to meet only a “balanced” budget, you won't hit the mark of “faith.”

Here's another example of setting your sights above just a “balanced” budget: **Leaksville** celebrated Victory Sunday in its stewardship campaign with \$112,578.34 pledged for 2003. That's a 31.2(!) percent increase over the \$85,823.40 pledged for 2002. Wow! Good going, Leaksville!