

Mission and Outreach



March 1st marks the beginning of the Unity of the Brethren in 1457. Each year we take a special offering to mark the occasion. This year the special offering is designated for the youth and Sunday School ministry in South Africa. Special envelopes will be available if you wish to contribute to this Unity project throughout Lent, February 18th to April 5th.

The first Moravian mission in South Africa began when one of its missionaries, Georg Schmidt, established a mission station at Baviaanskloof (later renamed Genadendal = Valley of Grace) in the Cape Province in 1737. Schmidt was sent to South Africa to convert the Khoi-Khoi. The government of the Dutch colony opposed his work. Because of his success in teaching the Khoi-Khoi and the baptism of five converts he was obliged to leave in 1744. During the fifty years after his departure the work was continued by the converts. When the Moravians were allowed to return in 1792, the missionaries found remnants of the first missionary congregation still active. In 1793 the mission enjoyed official recognition and a hopeful new beginning was made. The mission settlement flourished with people from different tribes joining. An educated Xhosa woman, Wilhelmina, fervently desired that the missionaries would proclaim the gospel among her people, in the Eastern Cape Colony. In 1828 the Moravians extended their missionary activities. The work expanded tremendously in the Western and Eastern Cape and is largely confined to the old Cape Province. According to the 2015 Moravian Church Directory there are approximately 42,000 members, 67 pastors, 87 congregations and 176 outstations.

