

MORAVIAN BODIES

GENERAL STATEMENT

Under the head of "Moravian Bodies," there were included in the reports for 1916 and 1906 the churches in the United States connected with the Unitas Fratrum, commonly known as the "Moravian Church," whose headquarters are at Herrnhut, Saxony, Germany, together with the Evangelical Union of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, a still older body, some of the members of which are lineal descendants of the founders of the Unitas Fratrum. Another smaller group of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren churches in the State of Texas, which was not reported as a separate religious body at the census of 1916, completed its organization November 1, 1915. Preliminary steps were taken in 1919 to unite with the Evangelical Union, and the two were finally recognized as one religious body on February 9, 1920, under the name Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America. There are also a few churches of the same origin in Iowa, which, while independent, are so closely affiliated that they are presented as a distinct body.

In view of their common origin, while they are not connected ecclesiastically, the three bodies are again presented in this report as a family. The principal historical facts common to all are given in the statement of the Moravian Church, the largest and the most widely known of the three denominations.

The denominations grouped under the name "Moravian" for the last three censuses are listed in the table below, with the principal statistics as reported for each period. One body not listed in 1906 is included in the table for 1916 and 1926.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE MORAVIAN BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1926								
Total for the group	164	37,243	146	\$4,160,250	163	\$753,463	149	21,858
Moravian Church in America.....	127	31,699	125	4,071,550	126	738,814	122	19,832
Evangelical Unity of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America.....	34	5,241	18	76,700	34	12,023	24	1,708
Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Church.....	3	303	3	12,000	3	2,626	3	318
1916								
Total for the group	136	28,407	122	1,396,940	135	316,526	127	15,867
Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum).....	110	26,373	106	1,368,220	109	309,180	104	14,954
Evangelical Union of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America.....	23	1,714	13	19,720	23	5,499	20	565
Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Church.....	3	320	3	9,000	3	1,847	3	348
1906								
Total for the group	132	17,926	121	936,650	-----	-----	109	12,998
Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum).....	117	17,155	113	922,900	-----	-----	107	12,901
Evangelical Union of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America.....	15	771	8	13,750	-----	-----	2	97

EVANGELICAL UNITY OF BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN IN NORTH AMERICA

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Evangelical Unity of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of this denomination comprises all baptized persons, including infants, on the church register.

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: EVANGELICAL UNITY OF BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN IN NORTH AMERICA

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PERCENT OF TOTAL ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations)-----	34	6	28		
Members-----	5,241	759	4,482	14.5	85.5
Average per church-----	154	127	160		
Membership by sex:					
Male-----	2,527	368	2,159	14.6	85.4
Female-----	2,714	391	2,323	14.4	85.6
Males per 100 females-----	93.1	94.1	92.9		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years-----	1,759	173	1,586	9.8	90.2
13 years and over-----	3,482	586	2,896	16.8	83.2
Per cent under 13 years-----	33.6	22.8	35.4		
Church edifices:					
Number-----	18	2	16		
Value—Churches reporting-----	18	2	16		
Amount reported-----	\$76,700	\$16,400	\$60,300	21.4	78.6
Average per church-----	\$4,261	\$8,200	\$3,769		
Debt—Churches reporting-----	2	1	1		
Amount reported-----	\$3,900	\$1,500	\$2,400	38.5	61.5
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice-----	15	1	14		
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting-----	4		4		
Amount reported-----	\$12,000		\$12,000		100.0
Debt—Churches reporting-----	1		1		
Amount reported-----	\$800		\$800		100.0
Churches reporting "no debt" on parsonage-----	3		3		
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting-----	34	6	28		
Amount reported-----	\$12,023	\$1,902	\$10,121	15.8	84.2
Current expenses and improvements-----	\$10,517	\$1,710	\$8,807	16.3	83.7
Benevolences, missions, etc.-----	\$1,506	\$192	\$1,314	12.7	87.3
Average expenditure per church-----	\$354	\$317	\$361		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting-----	24	4	20		
Officers and teachers-----	160	30	130	18.7	81.3
Scholars-----	1,708	254	1,454	14.9	85.1

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

The data given for 1926 represent 34 active churches of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, all of them in the State of Texas with 5,241 members. The classification of membership by sex and age was reported by all of the 34 churches, 33 of which reported members under 13 years of age.

Comparative data, 1906-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, and 1906. A number of Bohemian and Moravian churches, organized in 1915, but not shown as a separate body in 1916, have since that time united with this denomination.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1906 TO 1926: EVANGELICAL UNITY OF BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BROTHERS IN NORTH AMERICA

ITEM	1926	1916	1906
Churches (local organizations).....	34	23	15
Increase over preceding census:			
Number.....	11	8	
Per cent ¹			
Members	5,241	1,714	771
Increase over preceding census:			
Number.....	3,527	943	
Per cent.....	205.8	122.3	
Average membership per church.....	154	75	51
Church edifices:			
Number.....	18	13	8
Value—Churches reporting.....	18	13	8
Amount reported.....	\$76,700	\$19,720	\$13,750
Average per church.....	\$4,261	\$1,517	\$1,719
Debt—Churches reporting.....	2	1	
Amount reported.....	\$3,900	\$250	
Parsonages:			
Value—Churches reporting.....	4	3	2
Amount reported.....	\$12,000	\$3,950	\$700
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1		
Amount reported.....	\$800		
Expenditures during year:			
Churches reporting.....	34	23	
Amount reported.....	\$12,023	\$5,499	
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$10,517	\$4,669	
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$1,506	\$830	
Average expenditure per church.....	\$354	\$239	
Sunday schools:			
Churches reporting.....	24	15	2
Officers and teachers.....	160	62	6
Scholars.....	1,708	565	97

¹ Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The Peace of Westphalia, negotiated at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War,² in 1648, made no provision for the Unity of the Brethren nor any of the Protestants of Bohemia. The Edict of Toleration, also, proclaimed by Joseph II of Austria, in no sense gave complete religious liberty to Protestants, as it granted toleration to Protestants of the Augsburg and Helvetian Confessions only and denied it to the Unity of the Brethren; these supposedly suppressed Protestants had come forth by thousands, seeking to avail themselves of the provisions of this measure of toleration, but being denied this privilege, they organized under the forms tolerated, cherishing, nevertheless, the spirit of the Unity, under the new forms.

¹ This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Rev. Anthony Motycka, president of the Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America, and approved by him in its present form.

² See Moravian Church in America, p. 1052.

The limit of time within which the declaration of avowal of either of the Protestants confessions was to be made expired on January 1, 1783. Within that period a large number, variously estimated as from 90,000 to 150,000, had registered their declaration to become members of one or the other of the tolerated creeds. Other unfavorable conditions greatly hindered the advancement of the Protestant resuscitation. Church organizations were permitted only in instances where 100 families or at least 500 souls were reported; as a consequence many small communities dropped out entirely and were lost to the movement. Moreover, the churches actually organized were forbidden to build edifices resembling real churches; they were to be plain and uncouth meetinghouses, without steeples, bells, sanctuary windows, or organs; the location of these buildings was ordered to be in places inconveniently reached, with doors of entry in the rear and not from the street or public road.

Lutheran and Reformed ministers were called to serve as the pastors of these newly organized churches. The Reformed (Helvetian) ministers usually came from Hungary. But even under the leadership of these ministers, who were not members of the Unity of the Brethren, the spirit and traditions of the historic church were fostered and maintained.

The first steady immigration movement of any considerable numbers of Czechs and Moravians to the United States began in the second half of the nineteenth century; that is, about 75 years ago. Those coming from Bohemia and western Moravia settled chiefly in the Northern States, but some from north-eastern Bohemia and nearly all from eastern Moravia went to Texas. Among these immigrants were many adherents of the Brethren Church. The members of the Evangelical Unity have not only a spiritual kinship with that older Unity of the Brethren, but many of them are descendants by blood.

The first Bohemian evangelical sermon preached in Texas was that of the Rev. John Zvolanek, delivered at Fayetteville in 1855; the first local church of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren was organized in 1864 at Wesley by the Rev. Joseph Opocensky. Other churches were organized as various settlements were established. In 1889 the Rev. Adolph Chlumsky arrived from Bohemia and undertook religious work in different communities; he organized several churches and finally encouraged them to unite in one religious body. To promote this project he established a monthly periodical, of which he was editor for a number of years.

In the year 1903 delegates from nine churches and two preaching stations under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Henry Juren and the Rev. Adolph Chlumsky were called together at Granger, Tex., to form a united organization. Among the guests present was a representative of the Texas District of the German Evangelical Synod of North America. In due appreciation of the priceless heritage of the historical church, the ancient Unity of the Brethren, and with a holy desire and purpose to insure the blessings of these spiritual treasures to themselves and their posterity, they decided to form an organization and adopted the name of Evangelical Union of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren. In a succeeding assembly that met at Taylor, Tex., the following year a constitution was prepared and adopted; a State charter was secured December 30, 1904.

Contemporaneously with and by the side of this group of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren churches, another group of churches arose and was built up under the leadership of the Rev. Anthony Motycka, a native of Iowa and a graduate of the Oberlin, Ohio, theological seminary, who came to Nelsonville, Tex., in 1892. This group, in an assembly in July, 1915, on the five-hundredth anniversary of the death of John Hus, took steps to form a united organization, the project being completed in November of the same year.

The religious history, tenets, aims, and purposes of these two bodies were in all respects the same; several conferences of representatives prepared the way for a formal union; and on September 8, 1919, accredited delegates of both organizations unanimously adopted a resolution authorizing the two to reorganize and form a new religious body under the name "The Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America."

Rev. Henry Juren was the first president of the new Unity of the Brethren, and after his death Rev. Anthony Motycka was elected president in 1921 and in succeeding assemblies.

DOCTRINE

The Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren recognizes, as the one supreme and infallible authority in matters of faith and practice, the Word of God, the Holy Bible. It acknowledges the Apostles' Creed as a brief but exact expression of the essential tenets of the Christian faith and requires the pledge of its acceptance by its members. It recognizes as a valuable standard of exposition of the Scriptures the last Brethren's Confession, that of 1608, and their catechism for the religious instruction of youth; it accepts also the Helvetican and Augsburg Confessions as valuable standards of exposition of the Scriptures; but all these standards are accepted as subordinate to the Bible.

The ordinances of the Lord's Supper and baptism are observed in the manner recognized by most Christians of Protestant faith. Not only those who are able personally to confess their faith and pledge themselves to the tenets of the church are baptized, but also infants of believing parents. After careful religious instruction, and upon public profession of their faith in accordance with the tenets of the church, children of 14 years or more are admitted as communicants to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Dissolubility of marriage and the right to remarry are recognized only in the event of death and in cases of infidelity in the marriage relationship, ministers not being permitted to solemnize marriage of divorced persons unless they are the innocent parties in marriages annulled for said cause.

ORGANIZATION

The organization in its local churches as well as in its denominational body seeks to promote and carry out in practice the principle stated by our Lord: "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

The church has a carefully prepared constitution, enumerating the privileges and duties not only of the officers of the body, but of all of its membership.

All enactments and measures necessary for the management and welfare of the church find their expression in and through the General Assembly, which formerly met annually but now meets biennially, in July. This Assembly is composed of the officers of the church, the ministers of the gospel, and the duly elected delegates of the local churches, one delegate being chosen for every 50 adult members. The officers and the clergymen have a voice in the Assembly and are eligible for election to office, but they have a vote only if duly elected as delegates to represent the local church of which they are members.

All of the important enactments of the Assembly as well as the election of the officers, in order to become valid, must be ratified by a majority of the votes of the local churches within 30 days after the adjournment of the Assembly. Churches not voting are counted as ratifying the actions of the Assembly. Thus, in fact, the church has the referendum in its system, which enables it to come, in a large measure, to a realization of the spirit of real brotherhood. The Assembly, indorsed by the vote of the electorate, is the dominating body through which the supreme will and authority of all the members find expression and accomplishment.

The executive control and management of the affairs of the general religious body is intrusted to five members, known as the Synodical Board, elected at each General Assembly, composed of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and financial secretary. The principal duties of this board are clearly defined in the constitution of the church and embrace such other duties as the Assembly from time to time, through its enactments, imposes upon them.

The local churches subscribe to and pledge themselves to support the constitution of the church and to submit to the enactments of the Assembly. The local affairs and the ownership of property are in the hands of the local organizations. The churches have the right to elect their pastors, who must be thoroughly educated and properly qualified and members of the Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, but they should look to the president of the Unity for guidance and weigh carefully his advice before making their final choice. The management of the affairs of the local churches is intrusted to a body of four or six trustees, elected by the church annually. The pastor of the church is the presiding officer by virtue of his ministerial office; in his absence, one of the trustees, chosen as chairman, presides over the meetings of the "elders," as they are often designated.

If the local church ceases to exist, the Unity takes charge of the property. Should another church of the Unity come into being in the same locality, the property passes into its ownership; if within five years no such church is organized, the property then becomes the exclusive possession of the general religious body, the Unity.

WORK

The union of the two groups into one denominational body not only strengthened the church numerically and developed a spirit of good will and brotherly love, but it opened new and larger spheres for Christian work and activity.

The original Evangelical Union started to collect money for missionary purposes from the very beginning of its existence. One-half of the money so collected supplemented the salary of the ministers of the Union, and they were supposed to devote a part of their time to widely scattered settlements where perhaps only small groups of Protestant families were ministered to, and these groups often formed the nucleus of future churches. This was and still is considered an important part of home missionary work. The Evangelical Union had no laborer in a foreign mission field, but it devoted one-half of its collections to the missionary work of the German Evangelical Synod, to be used in its mission in India. This was during the period when some of the theological students of the former Evangelical Union were recipients of valuable educational advantages granted them by the Evangelical Synod. It should be noted that there never existed any formal or organic affiliation of the Union with the Evangelical Synod; and after the merging of the Union and the Independent Unity into the Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, the relationship of the Unity with the German Evangelical Synod ceased entirely. The foreign mission contributions have since been devoted to Czechoslovakia, where, since the World War, there has been an unusual religious awakening, in certain parts; and the first special contribution netting a little more than \$500, together with other smaller contributions, were given to the Brethren's churches of that country to be used for missionary purposes in their home field.

The Evangelical Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren provides for the religious education and training of its youth. The Hus Training School, maintained for a number of years by voluntary contributions administered by the "Association of the Hus Home" (Združení Husovra Domu), has trained pupils between 14 and 20 years of age and has not only raised the plane of enlightened Christian character among the young membership, but it has also given the

Unity many useful church workers and Sunday-school teachers. The school now has its own building, the "Hus Memorial Home," at Temple, Tex., and is at present in the charge of the Synodical Board, supported from the general fund of the church.

The Sunday-school work is pursued with much care, and the membership of the league of the Sunday schools of the Evangelical Unity of the Brethren has more than doubled in the last five years.

There is a benevolent aid society whose membership is restricted to members of the churches of the Unity. This organization numbers several hundred members, is steadily growing, and has a reserve fund of more than \$10,000.

Wise and earnest revival methods have proved by good results their value in supplementing the regular church work. These revivals have been the means, in the last few years, of adding many conscientious members to the church.