

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

BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN CHURCHES

STATISTICS

The three churches of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren reported in 1926 were all rural churches, in the State of Iowa. The total membership was 303, comprising 162 males and 141 females, all of whom were over 13 years of age.

The membership of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Churches comprises all communicants on the church registers.

No debt was reported on any of the church edifices nor on the parsonage.

Comparative data, 1926 and 1916.—Table 1 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics for the censuses of 1926 and 1916, this denomination having been reported for the first time as a separate body in 1916, though individual churches had prior existence.

TABLE 1.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1926 AND 1916: BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN CHURCHES

ITEM	1926	1916
Churches (local organizations)	3	3
Members	303	320
Increase ¹ over preceding census:		
Number.....	-17	-----
Per cent.....	-5.3	-----
Average membership per church.....	101	107
Church edifices:		
Number.....	3	3
Value—Churches reporting.....	3	3
Amount reported.....	\$12,000	\$0,000
Average per church.....	\$4,000	\$3,000
Parsonages:		
Value—Churches reporting.....	1	1
Amount reported.....	\$6,000	\$3,000
Expenditures during year:		
Churches reporting.....	3	3
Amount reported.....	\$2,626	\$1,847
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$2,148	\$1,532
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$478	\$315
Average expenditure per church.....	\$875	\$616
Sunday schools:		
Churches reporting.....	3	3
Officers and teachers.....	17	14
Scholars.....	318	348

¹ A minus sign (—) denotes decrease.

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

In 1858 a group of six families, formerly members of the Reformed Church of Bohemia, under the leadership of Rev. Francis Kun, organized the First Bohemian and Moravian Church, in College Township, Linn County, Iowa. After some years, in 1892, another church of the same antecedents was formed in Monroe Township, Johnson County, and three years later still another in Putnam Township, Linn County; the three churches are served by one pastor and the parsonage is held by them as common property.

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. Francis Pokorny, D. D., pastor of the churches, and approved by him in its present form.

While claiming the same origin as the Moravian Church in America and the Evangelical Unity of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, these churches are not ecclesiastically connected with either of these bodies. They hold friendly relations with the Presbyterian and the Reformed Bohemian churches of the Northwest and East, and enter into accord with them in movements for education and missionary work, in these respects affiliating especially with the Central West (Bohemian) Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

The independent Bohemian and Moravian churches recognize the Helvetic and Westminster confessions of faith and use the Heidelberg and Westminster catechisms. They administer baptism to the children of believers, and to adults on profession of faith. The Lord's Supper is celebrated four times a year, according to the usage of the Reformed Church of Bohemia. Ministers are required to be sound in the faith and to have a college and seminary education.

The general polity is presbyterian. A board of six elders, with the pastor, has oversight in spiritual things, while temporal matters are in the hands of six trustees. They have Sunday schools, and there is a Christian Endeavor Society whose membership consists of the young people of all three churches.