

A Message From Our President



As we celebrate our 550th anniversary, wherein Synod resolution 43 calls for us to initiate new mission activities in 2007 that will last for years to come. It is imperative that every congregation participates. If you are part of a small congregation then consider partnering with another congregation but don't let this opportunity pass you by. The need in our society and the world at large is great.

Last Sunday I had the opportunity to hear John and Pansy Young share the ministry that they started at "Potters House" on 25th Street in East Winston, North Carolina.

It breaks your heart to know that there is such great need in our community. Potter's House serves as a safe house, where anyone can seek spiritual guidance and physical assistance temporarily. They have ministered to the very poor to the very affluent. They have ministered to a poor pregnant eight year old to affluent pregnant college students. The need for mission outreach has never been greater. Societies ill will cost each of us dearly if we do nothing. Today there are 2.2 million people that are incarcerated in the US. That is 2.2 million that the state and federal

government supports. Mission outreach could have allowed some of these people to take a better path. Wouldn't it be great if we could minister to the young people who are most at risk and show them the meaning of Gods love.

I challenge each congregation to develop a mission outreach program that will change someone's life. The mission society has the resources to assist in establishing a mission outreach program for your congregation. Our primary mission is the fulfillment of God's mission.

Evon Crooks, President, Mission Society Southern Province

Where Justice and Mercy Meet

What do you do if you are a Christian judge who must sentence hundreds of people (sometimes fellow-Moravians) to many years in a prison that is miles away from their families, with little or no attention to their spiritual or emotional needs, and in the midst of terrible conditions? As a Christian, you are required to do justly, yet you must also love mercy. So, how do you find the balance between the two?



If you are the two judges of the Northern and Southern Region of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, you turn to the Moravian Congregation that is closest to the Penitentiary. You encourage and support the assistant pastor to begin a program of visitation and counsel (spiritual as well as – in some cases – legal!); you work toward guaranteeing that all accused persons have the right to

plead their case in front of a judge who speaks their language; then you find funding (including part of your own salary!) to turn a room deep inside the prison into a Moravian Chapel!

On Saturday, January 27th,

Bishops William Webster and Sam Gray, Pastor Amilcar, the warden, the local magistrate for the Atlantic Region, the two judges, and four

men representing the 4 language groups of the inmates, participated in the dedication of the Tipitapa Prison Moravian Church. The warden expressed his appreciation for the work of the church and spoke of significant changes in the lives of the almost 3,000 men in his care. Then his faced turned quite serious and he said, "you need to know that our detectives are investigating Pastor Amilcar,

trying to find evidence of criminal activity... so that we can be assured of his continued presence with us!!" The inmates cheered and applauded.

After the ceremony the delegation took a tour of the facility and then joined about 150 others in a service of worship and celebration in the assembly room of the prison. On Sunday morning, the real results were evident: when Sam Gray visited Pastor Amilcar's other congregation (in Managua) a young man came up to him and said, "I am the President of the Youth Association; Pastor Amilcar got to know me when he was visiting me in jail, and he wanted to recruit me, so he helped to set me free – and I *am* free indeed!"

Submitted by Rt. Rev. Sam Gray

Mandate for Mission
Genesis 12: 1- 4