

FIRST AFRICAN MORAVIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
30 August - -2 September 2018
at Tabata Moravian Church, Dar-es-Salaam, TANZANIA

Theme: "Moravian Women, Heeding God's Call in the 21st century"

1. OPENING

It is with much anticipation, excitement and jubilation that the women representing the Africa Region met at the TABATA Moravian church, Dar-es-Salaam, TANZANIA from 30 August to 02 September 2018. Provinces represented were: South Africa, The 7 respective Provinces of Tanzania (Western, Southern, South-West, Rukwa, Northern, Lake Tanganyika, Eastern), and the 3 Mission Areas, including the following countries Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Mbozi, Runga/Njombe, Eastern Congo. In total we had 381 registered delegates with many more women arriving on a daily basis to share in this historical gathering, total estimated was approximately 470 women in attendance on a daily basis.

2. WORSHIP

The opening service officiated by Bishop Conrad Nguvumali Sikombe, with the leadership (General Secretaries) and Pastors representing the Eastern Province present. Mrs Sophia Mjema, the District Commissioner for the region rendered a vibrant and moving motivational speech to the constituency. Choirs from different congregations set the tone of not only the service but also for the rest of the conference.

Daily devotions (morning and Evening) representing our Provinces and Mission areas took place, with a Lovefeast on the penultimate day and closing of the Conference with the Holy Communion, officiated by all the female Pastors present.

3. PRESENTATIONS (to be compiled in a publication later)

Bible Studies - Rev. Dr. Betsy Miller

Keynote Address - Sr. Colleen Cunningham

Biblical perspectives of Women in Mission - Rev. Adelyn Mgonela

The effects of Violence Against Women and Children - Prof. T. Kassimoto

The effect of HIV and AIDS on Women - Rev. Dr. Pauline Wanjiru (EHAIA - WCC)

Justice and Peace for Women - Dr Helen Kidjo-Bisimba (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania)

Empowering Women for a better Africa/World - Rev. Flora Mpayo

The contribution of Women to Mission - Sr. Angelene Swart

Mission 21, Nigeria - Sr's Susan Mark-Zilla and Panadi Dauda

4. WORKSHOP in GROUPS

We had 7 operative groups with a designated Workshop Leader, Scribe and Rapporteur. All presenters was asked to furnish the respective groups (7) with questions which formed the core of the discussions. The workshop sessions formed an integral part of the conference with many intense discussion and beautiful moments of sharing, support and new connections being made. Feedback from the groups are currently being translated (in some instances) and typed up for reporting purposes.

5. AFRICAN WOMEN'S DESK

The conference received and agreed upon the suggestion that the Steering Committee for the African Women's Desk comprise of the 3 current Provincial Sub-Desk Coordinators, 2 former Advisory Board members as Advisors, the current Advisory Board member and 1 co-opted member representing the francophone speaking members/countries. [Sub Desk Coordinators

are: South Africa: Sr Colleen Cunningham, Tanzania Western Province: Sr. Rachael Lwali, Tanzania South-West Province: Sr. Agnes Njeyo and the 2 Advisors: Sr's Mary Kategile and Angelene Swart and co-opted member: Sr. Chantal Bakamiriza from Burundi.]

6. NOMINATION OF ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER FOR THE AFRICA REGION

The Advisory Board member is appointed on a rotational basis as per Province for a period of 4 years. Further discussion amongst the women of the Tanzanian Provinces are currently being held in order to appoint the member.

7. OUTCOMES

- 7.1 The formation of the African Women's Desk, representing the 3 Sub-Desk Coordinators, 2 former Advisory Board members, current Advisory Board member and 1 co-opted member.
- 7.2. To have all presentations of the conference published.
- 7.3 To have a publication of women who influenced mission within the African Region.
- 7.4 To have similar conferences on a rotational basis, every 4 years.
- 7.5 Provinces to fundraise and source funding thereof.
- 7.6 The African Women's Desk to work on the same focus areas as the Unity Women's Desk.

8. CONCERNS

We are faced with a serious concern regarding our finances and financial contributions from the respective Provinces and Mission Areas in Africa. We do acknowledge that we submitted letters for funding rather late to our Provinces and many could not honour or contribute. We thus have a major deficit, requiring for another letter being sent to all our Provinces and Mission Areas requesting additional funding to offset our deficit. As this is our First Conference we also see this as a learning curve which should not occur again in the future. We sincerely and humbly request that the required understanding be shown in this regard.

Overall, we participated in a beautiful journey where dreams indeed come true and lasting relationships are built. We live in the Hope and Trust that this Conference started a movement for not only the Women in the Moravian Church in Africa but the Africa Region as a whole. All honour and Glory to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Yours in Christ

Compiled and submitted by Sr. Colleen Cunningham

On behalf of the Steering Committee - Sr's Mary Kategile, Angelene Swart, Rachael Lwali and Agnes Njeyo.

12/09/2018