A LOOK AT EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY
AMERICAN MORAVIAN LITURGY

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, to my wife Brandy, and to my children Phoenix and Hal, who have been a constant source of support throughout my studies.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis project is centered around the collection and editing of four eighteenth-century Moravian liturgical hymn services. In this context paper I describe Moravian worship practices in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America, and discuss how the liturgical hymn services fit into that worship cycle. This paper also describes the change in American Moravian worship that takes place throughout the nineteenth century, and brings to light numerous records from church diaries that illustrate why these changes are taking place. The final portion of this paper describes the sources used and the editorial decisions made in the collection of the four liturgical hymn services, which are provided as a supplement with this paper.
Introduction

For my capstone project I examined the history of American Moravian worship practices, especially in regards to the liturgical resources utilized in the American congregations, and how these practices changed during the nineteenth century. The creative work of this project was to produce some edited versions of liturgical services as used by the Moravians in the eighteenth century. The editions of these liturgies are found in a separate volume accompanying this paper. The final section of this paper is devoted to explanations about sources used and editorial decisions that were made in compiling the liturgies.

The focus of this context paper is to understand why and how the worship practices changed so drastically with special attention being given to the social changes in the nineteenth-century church. For most of this research I relied on primary sources such as congregational diaries and hymnal and liturgy books published in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I have included a number of these records within this paper and this research in the Moravian records constitutes a large portion of the work in this project. This paper addresses American Moravian worship during the eighteenth century, the problems that arise during the nineteenth century, and how the church responds to these problems with the publishing of the *Liturgy and Hymns of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum* (1876), a hymnal whose indelible influence on the modern American Moravian Church has not been fully recognized.

It is hoped that by providing several examples of early American Moravian liturgies, combined with the research contained in this paper, we may reach a deeper
appreciation of the rich history of Moravian liturgical worship as well as the uniqueness of contemporary Moravian liturgy.

**Eighteenth-Century Moravian Worship**

The first significant Moravian community established in America was Bethlehem, PA, founded in 1741. From the beginning, Bethlehem was intended to be a self-sufficient Moravian community in the New World. Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg arrived in Bethlehem in November of 1744, and was given the title *Vicarius Generalis Episcoporum et per Americam in Presbyterio Vicarius*. Spangenberg was given authority over all Moravian work in North America (Atwood, *Community* 119). Very quickly Bethlehem became the self-sufficient Moravian community it was intended to be. In addition to the social and economic characteristics necessary to function as a colonial community, Bethlehem Moravians also developed and adhered to a sacred liturgical life as developed and “Moravian” as that found in Herrnhut at the time. Craig Atwood describes Bethlehem as a “religious commune where the residents were expected to live entirely for Christ and his work. Every day, not just Sunday, was dedicated to the Lord; thus each day had moments for communal worship…” (Atwood, *Theology* 49).

The result was a weekly worship schedule that included morning prayers, a noon-day liturgy coinciding with the choir assignment for that day, and evening prayers. The rotating choir liturgies offered diversity in the daily liturgical theme. A record from the Bethlehem Diary on June 30, 1752 gives the following schedule (Atwood, *Theology* 50):

- **Monday**: *Address of the Church to the Holy Trinity (Trisagion)*
- **Tuesday (Single Sisters)**: *Prayer of the Church to her Mother*
- **Wednesday (Single Brothers)**: *Prayer of the Church to her Husband*
- **Thursday (Married Brothers and Sisters)**: *Prayer to the Church to her Father*
- **Friday**: *Passion Hymn*
- **Saturday (Widowers, Widows, and Children)**
Although the weekly worship schedule was amended from time to time, worship in Bethlehem remained consistent.

Weekend worship was especially important for the Moravians, as each Friday through Sunday represented liturgically the Passion-Resurrection story of Jesus—a sort of “mini-liturgical year” every week. Friday was devoted to Christ’s passion, often being remembered with the liturgy “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden” (O head full of blood and wounds). The Sabbath (Saturday) was celebrated with a lovefeast, and other prayer and music services. The Sunday schedule in Bethlehem in 1752 included the praying of the Church Litany at 6:00 A.M., preaching services in mid-morning, children’s services in the afternoon, reading of the Gemein Nachrichten at 2:00 P.M., the Gemeinstunde or a Singstunde at 7:00 P.M., and the Litany of the Life and sufferings of Jesus or the Hymns of the Wounds of Jesus at 8:00 P.M., followed by the evening prayers and blessing (Atwood, Community 149).

When the Moravian settlers arrived in Bethabara, NC on November 17, 1753, they immediately set about building a community modeled on their hometown of Bethlehem. The vigorous liturgical life of the Bethlehem community was at the center of life in Bethabara. The settling of Bethabara was marked by a lovefeast celebration held on the first day of inhabitance in the new town. During this lovefeast, the newly composed hymn “We hold arrival lovefeast here in Carolina land” was sung by the settlers (Records 1:80). The next day, Sunday, November 18, must have been a busy one for the settlers, but they found time to close the day with a prayer service: “In the evening we had our first Liturgy, the ‘Ave Agnus Dei,’ then evening prayer, and went once more to bed…” (Records 1:80). Although the first Bethabara settlers strove for the same pious
consistency in worship as their Bethlehem brothers and sisters, the harshness of the frontier and the amount of work to be done made this difficult, as the Bethabara Diary for December 19, 1753 reads: “Various last points were discussed, for example that at present it is not feasible to observe the Sabbath, while so much work needs to be done, but that now and then, when it suits, the rest can be taken, and Lovefeast held in the evening” (Records 1:84). Their attitude represents the devoted yet pragmatic approach to worship typical of eighteenth-century Moravians in America. As Bethabara continued to develop and grow, so, too, did the liturgical life of the community, as described in a letter from the Bethabara community to Bethlehem, sometime in 1754:

Each day they have morning prayers, a liturgy at noon (except when work in the fields interferes, when it is postponed to evening), and in the evening they have a singstunde, during which they read reports from other congregations, or a chapter from the Bible. Saturday evening they usually have Lovefeast; and they hold the Sunday services and observe the Church festivals carefully. (Records 1:105)

After examining the Records of the Moravians in North Carolina from the late eighteenth century, we must recognize the regularity and consistency of the liturgical patterns of the community. The settlers at Bethabara, and later at Salem, made it a priority to be as consistent as possible in following the daily, weekly, and yearly worship schedules. This included a number of short services on Sundays, as well as morning, noon, and evening services during the week. Many entries in the Bethabara Diary, such as this one from Sunday, April 21, 1754, begin with “The usual services were held…."

We must also recognize, however, that within this routine the Moravians celebrated a rich and diverse number of Christian festivals. In addition to the common Christian seasons and festivals such as Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Advent, and Christmas, and the Moravian festivals (August 13, for example), they also recognized other Protestant festivals,
especially the Lutheran festivals, such as Reformation Day, the Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession (*Records* 1:101).

**The Church Litany**

The large form of the Moravian Church Litany was originally adapted from the German Litany composed by Martin Luther (Crews, 31). Luther’s German Litany was very similar in nature to the Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Saints, however, Luther removed all invocations of the saints and petitions to the Pope were also removed. The German Lutherans did not use their litany with any uniformity or consistency. Local usage varied on what days or services the litany was used for, or where in the service it occurred. In some areas it was used for special days while other areas specified that it be used “occasionally, although no special day was designated” (Drews).

Eighteenth-century Moravians were drawn to the penitential nature of the German Litany as well as its simplicity of form. Whereas the repetitive nature of the German Litany limited its attractiveness to Lutheran worshipers, the Moravians found that the responsive prayers focused on the congregation and church served to reinforce the communal experience of the small Moravian settlements. By the eighteenth century, the Moravian Church Litany became the central liturgical experience around which Moravian worship life revolved. Historian Daniel Crews characterizes this liturgical prayer as follows:

> [E]ssentially a long responsive intercession for the church and the world, was generally sung on Sundays, not as part of a preaching service, but as a separate occasion for worship on its own. It was an all-encompassing prayer, and it is significant that other concerns and rituals in the life of the congregation were incorporated into it as appropriate….In the Church Litany, both symbolically and actually, the whole life of the congregation in the broadest context was incorporated into a formal act of worship. (Crews 31)
The commitment of early American Moravians to the Litany is evidenced by the earliest records from Bethabara. Recorded on Sunday, November 25, 1753, one week after the Moravian settlers’ arrival, “We prayed the Congregation Litany, and at noon had the liturgy ‘Ave, Agnus Dei.’ …Evening we continued reading the Synod diary; Br. Gottlob held evening prayer.” (Records 1:82). The Church Litany is mentioned numerous times throughout the eighteenth-century records, and is the normal morning worship service most Sundays.

The eighteenth-century Litany opens with the responsive chanting of the *Kyrie eleison* and the Lord’s Prayer. Following the Lord’s Prayer are several petitions to all three members of the Trinity and a hymn to the Trinity. Following the opening prayers and hymns are a long series of intercessions offered by the liturgist followed by a response by the congregation. These extended intercessions and responses constitute the largest part of the Litany. The first series of petitions are pietistic in nature, seeking protection of the individual from sin:

> From all coldness to thy merits and death, from all error, from all loss of our glory in thee, from unhappily becoming great, from all self-complacency, from needless perplexity, from confusions, from misunderstanding and hypocrisy, from light-minded or dark fanaticism, from tumult and sedition, from the murdering spirit and devices of Satan, from all deceitfulness of sin, from all sin, *Preserve us, gracious Lord and God!*

In the next series of petitions the worshiper is seeking comfort in Christ’s life and suffering:

> With thy human birth, with thy first blood-shedding, with thy meritorious tears, with all the troubles of life, with thy great poverty, with thy having taken upon thee the form of a servant, with thy being despised and rejected, with thy griefs and sorrows, with thy temptations, with all the perplexity and anguish of thy soul, with thy agony and bloody sweat, with thy being bound, buffeted, and reviled, with thy scourging and crown of thorns, with thy ignominious crucifixion, with
thy sacred wounds, with thy precious blood, with thy meritorious death, with thy coming again to thy Church, or our being called home to thee,  

Comfort us, gracious Lord and God!  

After a hymn, in the third series of petitions the worshiper asks to be blessed by the merits of Christ’s life. Within these petitions are found the pietistic virtues of Moravian communal life: childlike obedience, diligence at work, humility, meekness, patience, watching and praying.

With thy childlike obedience, with thy diligence at work, with thy humility, meekness, and patience, with thy watching and praying, with thy dying words, with thy rest in the grave, with thy victorious resurrection, with the last days of the Son of Man, with thy glorious ascension, with thy sitting at the right hand of God, with thy powerful intercession, with thy holy sacraments, with thy divine presence,  

Bless us, gracious Lord and God!  

The next section of the Litany is a long intercessory prayer, beginning with “Rule and lead thy holy Christian Church; increase the knowledge of the mystery of Christ, and diminish misapprehensions. Teach us how to receive those that are weak in faith, but not to doubtful disputations…. ” The prayers here are for the benefit of the whole Christian Church. While praying for help to “receive those that are weak in faith,” the Moravian community also prayed that in doing so they would not be influenced by their “doubtful dispositions.” This prayer demonstrates the eighteenth-century Moravians’ commitment to spreading the gospel and bringing the faithful to Christ; however, there was also a reluctance to open up the community too much to influence by those outside the faith. In order to bring peace to all mankind, the prayer continues by asking God to “bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us,” and this section closing with, “That we, as Christ’s members, be joined together in unity, and truly love each other.” Eighteenth-century Moravians lived together in small, closed communities where they sought to live
in peaceful harmony. Unity among Christians was very important to these Moravians, and the praying of the Litany reinforced these values on a regular basis. Each time the Litany was prayed, the entire community renewed their commitment to live together in harmony.

Praying the Church Litany so regularly served to strengthen the ties between church members; the Litany was the pivot-point around which the daily life in a Moravian settlement existed. Living in an eighteenth-century Moravian settlement was demanding, and church members, through the Litany, prayed for the spiritual fortitude to live up to the high ideals held by the community. All of the values which were important to communal living were earnestly prayed for every week in the Litany. Writing about Moravian worship, Bishop Augustus Spangenberg states that the “meeting for the Litany is one of the most blessed meetings of the congregation, and without very urgent necessity nobody stays away from it” (Records 3:1010). A note from the Bethabara Diary on Wednesday, October 6, 1756 reads, “At morning prayer we had a special sense of the nearness of the Saviour. At 9 A.M. we knelt before him in humble and trustful prayer, using the Church Litany, and laying before him the needs of the Congregation and of the entire country…” (Records 1:172).

Often times the Litany would serve as the liturgical structure into which the liturgist would insert specific concerns of the congregation. This entry from the Bethabara Diary exhibits just how fluidly the congregation used the Litany and further demonstrates how important the Litany was for reinforcing bonds between church members and furthering the mission of the church:

Bethabara Diary, October 6, 1755: A Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer in the land. At morning prayer we had a special sense of the nearness of the Savior.
At 9 A.M. we knelt before him in humble and trustful prayer, using the Church Litany, and laying before him the needs of the Congregation and of the entire country. (*Records* 1:172)

Bethabara Diary, August 13, 1758: When the Festal Day had been ushered in with the sound of trumpets, Br. Hofman held morning prayer. At 9 o’clock the Church litany was prayed, and at the proper place we thought of Br. And Sr. George Schmid’s little daughter Anna Rosina [born and baptized Aug. 1st]. At the words, “Care for the sick as Thy beloved,” we bore in mind our dear Br. Rogers; and the words, “Pour out thy Holy Spirit upon them that serve Thee” became a special prayer for the first souls won through this congregation…. (*Records* 1:190)

Bethabara Diary, September 30, 1781: At the usual time the Church Litany was prayed, and at the proper place the name of the infant Johann Jacob Blum was mentioned. (*Records* 4:1759)

This excerpt from the Salem Diary offers another example of inserting congregational news into the Litany:

January 25, 1778: Before the service with the Church Litany we heard from Bethabara that this morning at 7 o’clock the faithful old Single Brother Lung had quickly and blessedly gone home into his eternal rest in the wounds of Jesus….This home-going was announced to the congregation during the Litany, just before the prayer for eternal fellowship with all those who have preceded us. (*Records* 3:1219)

Understanding how earnestly these Moravians prayed the Litany we can imagine how emotionally charged that moment in the service must have been when the death of a Brother Lung was announced to the congregation. These several examples from the diaries at Bethabara and Salem illustrate the central role that the Litany played in those communities. Although the Litany was prayed regularly, often multiple times weekly, it remained a vibrant and central part of their worship experience.
Another central worship service for the Moravians was the Wundenlitanei, or “Litany of the Wounds.” The Wundenlitanei arrived in Bethlehem in 1744 and was prayed with regularity in the American congregations throughout the eighteenth century. The Wundenlitanei was structurally somewhat similar to the Church Litany, and was used in place of the Church Litany on especially penitential occasions such as Lent. The litany was also prayed on Fridays as part of the weekly liturgical schedule (Atwood, Zinzendorf’s 189).

Salem Diary, March 31, 1776: In beginning the Passion Week we sung, in the morning at 8:30, the Litany of the Life and Death of our Lord. In the evening service the account was read of the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem before his Passion, and the “Hosanna: Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord,” was sung with instrumental accompaniment. (Records 3:1058)

The Wundenlitanei reflects the eighteenth-century Moravians’ theology of the cross, and is full of graphic language describing the wounds of crucifixion:

“May your fear of suffering and death put to shame the courage of the martyrs!”
“May your holy baptism of blood ignite all of God’s earth!”
“May your sweat in penitential struggle pour over us in body and soul!”
“You scratches from the crown of thorns, mark us on our foreheads!”
“Mouth dripping spittle, that you would not have to spit out anyone!”
“Dead eyes, look out through our eyes!”
“Bloody foam from your back, wash our feet!” (Atwood, Zinzendorf’s 205-208)

These few lines demonstrate the graphic language of this litany and its focus on the wounds of the suffering Jesus. More will be discussed about this litany in the following section of this paper.
In contrast to the more formal and structured praying of the Church Litany, the eighteenth-century Moravians also enjoyed worshiping in ways that were less formal and structured in nature. These services were critical as they introduced more diversity and flexibility into the worship routine. One such service, the Singstunde (“singing hour”), consisted of a liturgical leader guiding the congregation in the singing of various hymn stanzas and tunes. This was done rather simply by the liturgist beginning the first line and the congregation joining in. The liturgist would arrange the verses so that the result was a musical sermon sung by the whole assembly (Asti 16). The Singstunde was used almost daily by the Moravians, as is evidenced by the records from the Bethabara Diary. This excerpt is from December 2, 1753. We note that the service was focused on the text for the day, the First Sunday of Advent:

In the morning we prayed the Congregation Litany. It rained nearly all day. In the evening Br. Nathanael held the Singstunde, and spoke touchingly on the Text for the day, concerning the incarnation of our precious Savior Jesus Christ. *(Records 1:83)*

Note that the Sunday morning service was the Litany while it was at the evening Singstunde service that focused on the Advent theme of “the incarnation of our precious Savior Jesus Christ.” Neither the Church Litany nor the daily litanies were thematically tied to the Christian church year. Often the Te Deum or the Festal Doxology would be sung on festival days, but the Moravians did not have the variety of seasonal liturgies found in other liturgical denominations. Therefore, the Singstunde was critical for the Moravians as it provided the flexibility and diversity for celebrating the seasons and festivals of the Church year.
While the Singstunde served an indispensable role in the life of the Moravian congregation, it also required an incredible amount of diligence and study on the part of the members to be successful. Because there was not time to search through a hymnal for stanzas, in order to follow the liturgist’s lead, worshipers had to memorize hundreds of hymn texts to participate in these services. The vast number of Moravian hymns (there were thousands) made it impossible to match a unique tune to each hymn. Instead, the Moravians categorized their hymn tunes by metrical forms, and composed multiple texts to go with each tune. As the congregations were in the habit of singing their hymns in four-part chorale style, it was even more important to keep the overall number of parts to memorize to a manageable (albeit impressive) number.

Two other important Moravian services are indebted to the Singstunde for their structure: the communion liturgies and the lovefeast. The Moravian communion service has the feel of a Singstunde in that various hymn stanzas are sung focusing on the appropriate theme for communion, with the occasional insertion of various communion prayers and consecrations. Likewise, the lovefeast service is comprised of singing topical hymn stanzas but with the sharing of a simple meal. Like the Singstunde, the communion service and lovefeast were used to mark special occasions and allowed the flexibility to relate to the festival day through the hymn texts. It is also important to note that, in addition to other celebrations, the lovefeast service was used as a preparatory service preceding communion. The lovefeast would occur either earlier on the same day as communion or on the preceding day.

Bethabara Diary, November 20, 1753: Br. Nathanael held morning prayer, and announced that the Lord’s Supper would be celebrated this evening….In the afternoon it rained, which interfered with our work. We baked Lovefeast bread in a pan, using cornmeal. (Records 1:80)
Bethabara Diary, January 2, 1774: [I]n the evening we had Lovefeast, followed by the Communion; the Lamb of God, slain for our sakes, seemed very near, and again laid His blessing upon his humble followers in North Carolina. (*Records* 1:90)

From the records we can see that either a Singstunde or lovefeast service was held almost daily during the eighteenth century, adding a great deal of diversity and creativity to the regular worship schedule of the Moravian congregations.

**Liturgical Hymns**

There have been some questions about the terms “liturgy” and “litany” as it was used by the Moravians. It is clear from the records that the primary Sunday worship service was the Church Litany, sometimes simply referred to as “the Litany.” Two other litany services are referred to specifically in the records and were used for specific purposes, the Litany of the Life and Death of Our Lord, and the Easter Morning Litany. One of these three litanies was regularly prayed every Sunday morning and on other special days throughout the year, and the diarists were careful to note which of these services was being prayed.

The other liturgical services commonly used by the Moravians were referred to as “choir litanies,” “choir liturgies,” or “liturgies.” Although there is some inconsistency in terminology, there is no evidence from the records that these services were ever used interchangeable with the three major litany services discussed above. For clarity I refer to these services as “liturgical hymns.” This term makes the most sense for several reasons. First, these services are basically verses from different hymns that are arranged to be sung antiphonally by several groups, usually a liturgist (or pastor), women, men, choir, and all. Secondly, as these liturgical hymns were incorporated into worship books in the
late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, they were clearly placed in different sections than the major litanies, and were called “Liturgic Hymns” in the English liturgy book *Liturgic Hymns of the United Brethren* (1793) and *Lobgesänge* (“praise songs”) in the German publication *Liturgische Gesänge der evangelischen Brüdergemeinen* (1823).

Most of the litanies Atwood discusses in *Theology in Song* can be found in these two sources. Thirdly, these worship services were most often referred to in the late-eighteenth century in America as liturgies:

Bethabara Diary, November 18, 1753: In the evening we had our first liturgy, the ‘Ave Agnus Dei,’—then evening prayer, and went once more to bed…." *(Records 1:80)*

Bethabara Diary, Nov. 25, 1753: We prayed the Congregation Litany, and at noon had the liturgy ‘Ave Agnus Dei.’ *(Records 1:82)*

Atwood points out that the Te Agnum liturgy (referred to in the records as ‘Ave Agnus Dei’) was the normal Sunday evening liturgy in Bethlehem, and it was in fact prayed the first two Sunday evenings the settlers were in Bethabara. Below is the liturgical hymn Te Agnum as printed in the English publication *Liturgic Hymns of the United Brethren* (1793). I have indicated to the left the verses sung by all (A), the sisters (S), the brothers (B), and the choir (Ch). In some cases the rubrics instructing the antiphonal singing in the English hymn book were unclear, so I have used the cues from the German hymn book for clarification. I have used the tune numbers as indicated in the English version; however, the final stanza I have used the German instruction to use T. 235.
T. 235
A: Unspotted Lamb of God,
   Our holy Spouse by blood,
   Who from thy throne cam’st down
   And took’st our flesh and bone.

   The Cherubim and Seraphs cloud
   Extol thy praise with voices loud,
S: The Church above joins in that strain
A: Honor doth to the Lamb pertain. Amen.

T. 22 A
A: The Father in the Father’s throne,
   His only and beloved Son,
   The Holy Ghost, the Comforter,
   In thee, O Lamb, we now revere.

T. 22 L
A: Worthy art thou, O Lamb of God,
S: Who shed’st for us thy precious blood,
A: Power and glory to receive,
   What Angels or what men can give.

B: Thou slaughter’d Lamb, we honor thee,
   And praise thy office tremblingly;
S: Thou art the final judge declar’d;
A: Lord over life and death thou art.

T. 22 D
A: Thy love, O Lamb, our love doth claim,
   And our desire is to thy name;
Ch: That name which only to thee’s known
   Lay it upon us, we’re thy own.

A: In this world thou art no more now,
   Us, as thy race, thou leav’st below;
   Take us into thy special care,
   Secure our souls from ev’ry snare.

T. Te Deum (T. 235)
Let our white robes of righteousness
Be by thy blood kept clean always,
Till though shalt ever of thy bride
The temple, light, and Lamb abide. Amen
Upon examination of this liturgical hymn it becomes evident that praying these liturgies required a high degree of familiarity with the texts and tunes. The tunes, which were not printed with the text, change several times. There is no evidence that there was any introduction or modulation between tunes. The modern Moravian congregation in Herrnhut does not modulate between or introduce individual hymns in lovefeast or communion services, and it is likely that the eighteenth-century liturgical hymns flowed smoothly from one stanza and tune to the next. Also, the antiphonal nature of the arrangement requires each member to follow closely the liturgy to be prepared for when to join in the singing. This style of worship was important to the Moravians as is evidenced in this entry in the Bethabara Diary on December 19, 1753: “For religious purposes we divided into groups” (Records 1:84). This record is interesting in that the only settlers in Bethabara this early were men. We know that they were all living in the same small cabin, and there is no other recorded evidence of splitting into groups for any other purpose. It seems that, in the absence of the women, the men in Bethabara had to organize into worship groups in order to pray the liturgies in appropriate antiphonal style.

In both the German Liturgische Gesänge der evangelischen Brüdergemeinen and the Liturgic Hymns of the United Brethren printed in England, the liturgical hymns (hymns of praise) are organized in four categories honoring the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Although these liturgies were thematic in nature, it is important to note that they were not seasonal. There were no liturgical hymns designated to follow the Christian liturgical calendar; rather, the various liturgies would be used on a weekly cycle throughout the year. In comparison, the Singstunde and lovefeast services provided the opportunity for more seasonal worship throughout the year. Unlike the Singstunde the
liturgical hymn services, because of their complexity, required that worshipers follow along with printed copies of the liturgies which were evidently updated and amended throughout the century.

**The Nachtrichten**

We have already examined how praying the Church Litany reinforced the communal nature of the Moravian congregations. The prayers extended beyond the individual congregations to the other Moravian congregations throughout America and Europe. It should be noted that the Moravian settlers in North Carolina left behind immediate family members and close friends in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Furthermore, members in both the major American towns were still one generation removed from their brothers and sisters in Germany. The sense of unity in the eighteenth-century Moravian Church was quite strong around the world. The records show that the settlers in North Carolina were intensely interested in news from both Bethlehem and Germany. The congregations held regular meetings called Nachtrichten where correspondence from other Moravian communities were read aloud. It is important to note that this sharing was incorporated as part of the worship schedule, and as we have seen from the litany services, the congregation members prayed earnestly for the other Moravian communities around the world, and it was a comfort to know that other congregations were praying for them.

Bethabara Diary, November 25, 1753: We prayed the Congregation Litany, and at noon had the liturgy Ave Agnus Dei. Evening we continued reading the Synod diary; Br. Gottlob held evening prayer. (*Records* 1:82)

Bethabara Diary, Jan. 6, 1754: In the morning we prayed the Church Litany. At noon we read one of Count Zinzendorf’s sermons….In the evening we read more about the single Brothers Synod. (*Records* 1:90)
Bethabara Diary, Feb. 17, 1754: Morning we prayed the Church Litany, and later read one of the Juenger’s sermons….In the evening we had a little Lovefeast, and thought much about our dear ones in Bethlehem. The lovefeast was followed by our Choir liturgy. (*Records* 1:95)

Salem Diary, Aug. 5, 1781: After praying the Church Litany, Nachrichten from the West Indies were read. From the Bethlehem diary for April, which Br. Marshall read in the afternoon, we saw with joy what the Lord has done for that congregation, and noted their hearty sympathy for our circumstances. (*Records* 4:1698)

Mission work was very important to the Moravians, and those doing mission work were also remembered in the prayers of the congregation.

Salem Diary, Dec. 23, 1781: In the litany service we remembered before the Lord our Indian congregations and their missionaries, who according to all reports are in grave danger. (*Records* 4:1707)

The fluid communication between congregations also meant that the American churches could obtain the latest revisions and printings of hymns and liturgies.

Salem Diary, Mar. 25, 1781: The Festival of All Choirs: In the evening the Litany of the Life, Sufferings and Death of Jesus was sung for the first time in the revised form appearing in the new Unity Hymn Book. (*Records* 4:1688)

It is clear from the records that eighteenth-century Moravians were closely connected across the vast distances that separated their communities. The unity of the global church was so important to them that reading letters or memorabilia from other communities was a regular part of the worship schedule in the American congregations. Prayers for distant friends and family were incorporated into the prayers of the Litany and sermons from Europe were read in worship services in Bethabara. The sense of global unity among Moravians was a distinguishing characteristic in the worship experience of eighteenth-century American Moravians.
Nineteenth-Century Changes

A series of changes in the American Moravian congregations throughout the nineteenth century led to an overall decline in the worship experience. In this section we will look at a number of commentaries from the records that speak to the sad state of Moravian worship during the early part of the century. From the Salem Diary in 1857 we find:

Thursday, April 9, Maundy Thursday: At [2:30] and 4 P.M. Bro. Bahnson kept the usual meetings. There were not many men in, as sweet anticipation had led one to expect. It seems to be very hard to give up a business day. Many send their young men, stay away themselves. Well, if both the old and the young cannot come, perhaps the young are more benefited by coming. (Records 12:6225)

Saturday, July 18: Bro. Bahnson kept a meeting for our Great [older] boys. Not all were present. Of course they deserve less censure than their parents. The boys themselves dislike these meetings, I believe, and the question might be a timely one, whether all these Choir festivals ought not be abolished, with the exception, if any, of the Married People and Children’s festivals. (Records 12:6228)

These kinds of comments would have been unimaginable fifty years earlier, but seem to indicate the normal state of affairs in Salem during the middle part of the century. As congregation members began to assimilate into American society, work and other obligations began taking the men away from the rigorous worship schedule of the eighteenth century. Even during the time of Passion Week, so important to the Moravian communities, men found it “hard to give up a business day.” Attendance is so bad that the diarist wonders if the choir festivals should be given up completely.

In addition to the poor attendance, most church members were now speaking mostly English with fewer and fewer native German speakers:

Salem Diary, Thursday, May 21, Ascension Day: At 3 P.M. the new chapel in the Female Academy was consecrated. Bro. Bahnson opened with prayer and preached on Ps. 76:2. Salem is his tabernacle. In the evening a liturgy in German was sung, Bro. Bahnson occupying the chair. The attendance was very poor and
the singing no better. Liturgies in the German language have seen their day here at Salem and ought to be abolished altogether. (Records 12:6227)

The attendance and language problems were actually two-fold. Not only did it negatively impact the quality of the worship experience, but it greatly reduced the worship materials available to the congregations. Most of the liturgical materials were designed to be sung antiphonally, so if there were few men in attendance, for instance, it made it difficult to perform the liturgy well. There were also problems due to the language differences:

Bethania Diary, May 29, 1851, Ascension: The liturgical service in the evening was pretty poorly attended. But so much is lost when every word has to be read out to be repeated [by the congregation]! The old members still have old liturgy books and hymnals; the younger, neither the one nor the other, neither German nor English, and of course they don’t know the stanzas by heart either! If only things had not been allowed to reach this point. (Records 10:5623)

Salem Diary, Sunday, June 12, 1870, Trinity Sunday: In the evening Bro. O. kept a singing meeting in praise of the Holy Trinity, congregation and choir alternating in singing hymns. But as the congregation does not know what the choir sings and the hymns must be lined out for them, it is not exactly the thing. We should have some printed English [emphasis mine] liturgies. (Records 13:6892)

The careful management and distribution of liturgical resources that had made eighteenth-century worship possible was no longer present. Poor attendance made it difficult to pray the liturgies antiphonally as had been done, there were not enough liturgy books to go around, the younger members did not have the hymn stanzas memorized making Singstunden impossible, and the language problems simply compounded all these issues.

Additionally the Moravian congregations were now competing with other evangelical churches in the area whose difference in worship style and theology was apparently drawing away members:
Salem Diary, Sunday, January 3, 1858: A new Methodist Minister begins his activity at Winston, which proves an irresistible temptation to many. (*Records* 12:6263)

The Friedland diarist complains as early as 1841 that “almost every Sunday this month either the Methodists or Baptists have held meetings in our neighborhood and these have drawn most of our Brethren away” (Crews and Starbuck 284).

The pressure being placed on Moravian congregations was intensified by the growing isolation of the American congregations from the world-wide church. Although once a vital part of Moravian life and worship, the close connection with Moravians across the country and world had now been greatly diminished:

Much of the legislation adopted by [General Synod [in Europe] did not apply to the American scene. As a result neither the pastors nor the congregations made any real effort to carry out various synodical regulations, and the Unity’s Elders Conference did not insist on their doing so. Official visits had grown so infrequent that the American churches had come to consider themselves as stepchildren of the Unity, left by its authorities to manage their own affairs and to adopt such measures as their circumstances seemed to dictate. (Crews and Starbuck 299)

A strong argument can be made that it was the combination of the increased outside pressure alongside the increasing isolation of the American Moravian communities that leads to the radical changes in worship and music. Nola Knouse characterizes it as follows:

This “golden age” of Moravian music could not endure through the social and cultural changes of the nineteenth century. Throughout Europe and North America in particular, consciousness of national identity supplanted the Moravians’ earlier focus on their international unity. Moravians in America made conscious choices to conform to the culture of their neighbors. By the middle of the nineteenth century in America, English became the language of worship. (Knouse, “Moravian Music” 255)

The impact of the older Moravian worship style on the nineteenth-century church was not missed by influential pastor and musician Francis Florentine Hagen writes to the synod in
his essay, “Thoughts on the Past and Present Condition of the Moravian Church in America”:

By forcing upon English-speaking American Churches foreign tunes, which but few are able to sing properly, we estrange from our services the very people among whom God has placed us to work. Need we wonder at our stunted growth? (Knouse, “Moravian Music” 255)

The active and diverse worship life of the eighteenth-century Moravians had become stagnant by the mid-eighteenth century. Key forms of worship like the liturgical hymns and Singstunden that had been so important on a daily and weekly basis had become, through poor attendance, a lack of proper materials, and a decline in the learning of hymn stanzas and tunes, unusable. The dynamic character of the antiphonal singing of liturgical hymns and the spontaneous singing of hymn stanzas in the Singstunden must have been greatly diminished if not painful to participate in, especially if, as Hagen writes, every hymn line must be called out to be repeated by the congregation. Moravian worship required a high degree of preparedness and skill to execute properly, and the nineteenth-century church was woefully lacking in both respects.

The decreasing attendance at weekday services along with the decline in satisfactory execution of the liturgy services and Singstunden meant that much of the diversity of Moravian worship was lost. The Church Litany was still being prayed on Sunday mornings as it had been for centuries, but now without the enhancement of daily and weekly liturgical services to keep things fresh. The litany had always been given more emphasis by the Moravians than other denominations. The Catholics and Lutherans, both of whom used a form of the litany drawn on by the Moravians, had used the litany only for certain occasions during the year, and had fallen out of usage altogether in many Lutheran communities. As P. Drews writes, “The reformed church had little sympathy
with the litany, and rejected it almost without exception, so that wherever Calvinism
gained supremacy over Lutheranism, the litany was abolished” (Drews). The American
Moravian congregations were struggling with liturgical services that could no longer be
performed as they had in the past, were competing with outside pressures of evangelical
churches in the area, and the main Sunday morning service was the Church Litany, a
prayer that had ceased to be used by most denominations outside the Moravian Church.
As the century progressed the church was faced to deal with these issues bringing about a
completely new direction in Moravian worship in this country.

*Offices of Worship and Hymns (1866)*

One of the first attempts to reinvigorate Moravian worship was the publication of
*Offices of Worship and Hymns* in 1866. Included on the committee that worked on the
publication was Rev. Peter Wolle, whose *Moravian Tune Book* (1836) had greatly
improved Moravian worship by collecting and updating appropriate tunes to accompany
the common hymns used in worship. The Provincial Synod of 1864 had requested that a
new hymn book for use in schools be published, and that the offices of worship currently
being used in some boarding schools be revised and included in the hymn book (*Offices
of Worship* iii). The preface to the publication gives some insight into the goals that the
committee had when compiling the hymn book. The committee sought to include hymns
that were “suitable for worship” and of “permanent worth” in hopes that the children may
begin to commit some of these hymns to memory, saying, “These once incorporated into
the memory, will remain there through life, and be a treasure of scriptural doctrine, of
warning and comfort, which will never be exhausted, and become increasingly valuable
with added years and experience.” The committee hoped that by using this hymn book in
Sunday school and the boarding schools that a new generation of Moravians would grow
up with a greater knowledge of hymnody than was present among most adults at the time (Offices of Worship iii-vi).

The addition of tunes to the hymn book is noteworthy in two respects. First, it had been customary to print the texts and music in different publications, often leaving it to the musicians to acquire appropriate tune books themselves. This made sense when congregations were matching thousands of stanzas to various hymn tunes, but with the reduction of texts being used in the nineteenth century it was unnecessary and cumbersome. Including the tunes made them more accessible and helped to standardize the musical settings being used. Secondly, the hymn book contains a number of new American tunes that were already in use in almost all the Moravian congregations. Their addition in this hymn book was meant to standardize the tunes being used, but was not intended to displace the older tunes already in use (Offices of Worship vi).

Another influential addition to the hymn book was the Offices of Worship which were meant for “occasional use” to increase the “spirit of devotion” among the school children. The offices were basically short liturgical services that mixed responsive readings mostly “in the language of scripture” with prayers and hymn stanzas. While these orders incorporated many characteristics of traditional Moravian worship, their overall structure is a new creation. As an example, Office No. 2 begins with a series of responsive readings that are different from the obsecrations found in the litanies (Offices of Worship 12-14):

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me.

*Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising, though understandest my thoughts afar off.*

Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

*For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts:

*And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Following the opening response the Lord’s Prayer is recited together. Interestingly, following the prayer, there are a series of obsecrations as found in the litany:

Lord God, Son, thou Savior of the world,
*Be gracious unto us.*
By thy human birth,
By thy prayers and tears,
By all the troubles of thy life,
By the grief and anguish of thy soul,
By thy bonds and scourgings,
By thy crown of thorns,
By thine ignominious crucifixion,
By thy atoning death,
By thy rest in the grave,
By thy glorious resurrection and ascension,
By thy sitting at the right hand of God,
By thy divine presence,
By thy coming again to thy Church on earth or our being called home to Thee,
*Bless and comfort us, gracious Lord and God.*
Lord God, Holy Ghost,
*Abide with us forever.*

It is unclear whether any part of these prayers from the litany were intended to be sung or chanted, but no indication is made in the hymn book. Following the obsecrations from the litany is a hymn, then a scripture lesson and a “short address and prayer.” The assembly then recites together a long creedal statement and the service closes with a sung benediction.
These orders are intended to be self-contained orders of worship and one gets that sense when reading through them. The services offered the students and opportunity to pray together using scripture, read creedal statements, sing several hymns, and pray a few prayers from the Church Litany without having to use the entire litany. By the third printing in 1891 the committee had recognized also the use of the hymn book for “morning and evening worship in the family.” The offices of worship were expanded from seven in 1866 to thirty-one in later editions (Offices of Worship, 1902). It seems that the offices of worship were popular among the congregations and may have filled a gap left open by the loss of the aforementioned liturgical hymn and Singstunde services in the nineteenth-century church. The innovations included in the Offices for Worship were also incorporated in future hymnal editions for the American churches.

Liturgy and Hymns of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum (1876)

Prior to 1876 the hymnals in use in the American congregations were either imported from Germany or England, or were adaptations of European hymnals printed in the United States. No “American” Moravian hymnal existed through most of the nineteenth century (Frank and Knouse 52). Faced with the challenges discussed the American Moravian Church decided that a new hymnal able to meet the unique needs of American churches was needed. The issue was first taken up in the Provincial Synod of 1864, and resolutions were passed in the Synods of 1864, 1867, 1868, 1870, and 1873 that would mold the character of the new hymnal (Liturgy and Hymns vi). In May of 1864 the resolution that “the subject of the revision of our English Hymn Book, and the insertion of additional litanies in the German Hymn Book be referred to the Committee on Publications with instructions to report” was adopted (The Moravian, 26 May 1864).
Interestingly the synod minutes state that in the middle of the deliberations about the new hymnal, a “Rev. Dr. Cox,” who was invited by the president of the P.E.C., spoke to the synod,

particularly with regard to the tendencies toward union manifesting themselves among all evangelical churches, and the part the Moravian Church, in his opinion, was specially ordained by her history, ritual and apostolic system to take in this great work. His remarks were of the most eloquent kind and breathed the spirit of Christ. (The Moravian, 26 May 1864)

The individual referred to as Rev. Dr. Cox was likely Samuel H. Cox, a Presbyterian pastor who served several churches in New York and New Jersey. Rev. Cox was very much influenced by the Oxford Movement, which among other things, was calling for a renewal of the liturgies and music of the protestant denominations. (Encyclopedia Britannica). Inviting Samuel Cox to speak at this synod further demonstrates the interest in the Moravian Church to work toward unity with other American protestant churches, and also gives evidence of the influence on larger Christian movements, such as the Oxford Movement, on the liturgy and hymn revisions taking place in the middle of the century. Earlier in that year, Moravian editor Edmund De Schweinitz published a note in the periodical asking that anyone familiar with the history of the church’s liturgies please contact the archives with information (The Moravian, 11 February 1864).

During the 1867 Synod the committee reported that much of the work had been completed in the “translation from the German of such of our liturgies as are suitable for use, particularly on festival days of the Christian Church” (The Moravian, 28 May 1867) It would be of great value if the committee records on this work were to be located in the archives and examined. We know from the records that the Moravians followed closely the Christian calendar, and celebrated many festivals throughout the year; however, the
introduction of published liturgies that followed the Christian year was new in the
Moravian Church. Previously pastors would have created a Singstunde or lovefeast
service to mark the occasion, and any of the liturgical hymn services such as the Te
Deum or Festival Doxology could be used, but printed liturgies for the festivals of the
church year had never been printed in hymn books. However, the synod deliberations as
well as the preface to the 1876 hymnal suggest that the new seasonal liturgical liturgies
are translations and adaptations from preexistent German liturgies:

In accordance with synodical enactments, the Liturgy has been carefully revised,
and the Liturgical Services for the Festivals of the Christian Church and other
special occasions, ordered by the synod of 1864, have been appended. These
Services are all based upon such as have been in use, for many years, in the
German Moravian Church. (Liturgies and Hymns vi-Emphasis added)

The structure of the liturgical services compiled for the 1876 hymnal is different
from any known Moravian liturgies prior to that period. It seems more likely that the
committee used the structure of the services in the Offices of Worship, added more
hymns, and thematically linked them with festivals and seasons of the church year. Like
the offices of worship the new festival liturgies mix hymn verses with long responsive
readings, and as in the new liturgical services for Advent, Christmas, and Lent, also
include sections of obsecrations from the Litany. It is clear that the Offices of Worship
was very popular and its use had spread beyond the schools that it was originally
developed for. In fact, the 1867 Synod resolved that “the introduction and general use of
the collection of Sabbath School Hymns and Offices of Worship, recently published, be
recommended to our congregations” (The Moravian, 28 May 1867). Given the popularity
of the offices and the recommendation that congregations begin using them in 1867, and
the structural similarities between the offices of worship and the new liturgical services, it
seems probable that the committee used the offices as the guide for creating the new liturgies.

The Liturgical Services section in the 1876 hymnal contained services for the following occasions (Liturgies and Hymns 1876, viii):

- The First Sunday in Advent
- The Second Sunday in Advent
- Christmas Day
- Epiphany
- The Season of Lent
- Easter
- Whit-Sunday
- Trinity Sunday
- In Memory of the Martyrs
- Thanksgiving
- A Day of Humiliation and Prayer

In later revisions of the hymnal services for Ascension Day, and the Office of Worship for Sunday Evening, I and II were added. The inclusion of the two “Office of Worship” evening services in this sections also support the suggestion that these liturgical services were inspired by the services in the Offices of Worship publication.

The Liturgical Services section begins with a note: “These Liturgical Services are intended for use, at the discretion of the Minister, in the morning or evening service of the days named. If used in the morning, they shall take the place of the Litany, and be followed by the sermon; if in the evening, they shall be followed by a sermon or a short address.” It is important to understand that at this point the new liturgies were meant to be used for specific festivals or seasons, and that the Church Litany would continue to serve as the main form of liturgical worship throughout the year.

Over the following decades, however, the popularity of the new liturgical services grew and congregations began looking for other alternatives to the litany as the main
Sunday morning service. The *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church* (1923) continued using the same basic format of liturgies as found in the 1876 hymnal; however the two Offices of Worship were moved from the seasonal liturgies section to immediately following the Church Litany and renamed General Liturgies I and II, seemingly to suggest that ministers could use them as substitutes for the litany on Sundays where there was not an appropriate seasonal liturgical service. There were also several new liturgical services added, but otherwise, very few minor changes were made to the liturgies.

The *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church* (1969) further develops the use of “general liturgies” alongside the litany. General Liturgy I becomes the Liturgy of Confession, General Liturgy II is renamed the Liturgy of Trust. New additions are the Liturgy of Adoration and the Liturgy of Covenanting, further adding to the general liturgy alternatives to the use of the litany. The *Moravian Book of Worship* (1995) currently used today continues in the path set forth since 1876. It contains seven general liturgies (General Liturgy 1 contains long and short versions of the litany), twelve liturgies associated with the church year, and eleven “topical” liturgies” for things like Christian Homes, Christian Unity, Education, and others.

Another major innovation of the 1876 hymnal was the addition of Communion Liturgies with specific hymns listed for each of the six printed services. These liturgies were also specifically requested by the 1864 Synod along with the seasonal liturgies, resolving, “That this Synod recommends the publication of two collections of Liturgies for Communion—one in the English and one in the German language—in order thereby to effect a greater uniformity in the Church, with regard to the celebration of the Lord’s
Supper” (*The Moravian*, 28 May 1867). As previously described, hymns for communion services had been chosen by the pastor and led much like a Singstunde or lovefeast. The first five communion liturgies are best described as general services with hymns stanzas suitable for various occasions, though the sixth liturgy is specified specifically for Maundy Thursday. The hymn texts were not included in this edition, so the hymns were identified by hymn number and the first line of the text, along with the specific stanzas to be used. Below is the communion liturgy for Maundy Thursday (*Liturgy and Hymns* 604-608).

634, 1, 2. In that most dark and doleful night.
   *Prayer* [Right hand of fellowship.]
   Say my peace I leave with you,
   Amen, amen, be it so.
378, 2. Lamb of God! to thee I cry.
   *Words of Institution*
367, 1. Jesus, Lord most great and glorious
281, 4, 5. By thine hour of dire despair.
117, 1-3. Come to Calvary’s holy mountain.
141, 2, 6. Fall at his cross’s foot.
   “Take eat; this is my body, which is given for you.”
   *Silent Prayer*
647. Ye followers of the slaughtered Lamb.
   *Words of Institution*
630, 1-3. According to thy gracious word.
124, 1, 3. Sing with awe in strains melodious.
308, 1, 2, 4. Rock of ages, cleft for me.
653. Lord! at this closing hour.
   [Right hand of fellowship.]
114, 10. Lamb of God, thou shalt remain forever.

In later revisions of *Liturgy and Hymns* the communion liturgies were moved to the front of the hymnal following the liturgical services and the hymn texts were printed. The total number of communion liturgies was expanded to ten with the following designations for use in the church year. (Note: The hymnal examined makes no indication that it is a later edition or alteration from the original printing and the title page gives 1876 as the
copyright; however, the alterations mentioned above indicate that this was in fact a revised edition sometime after 1876.)

I. Opening Year  
II. Lent  
III. Maundy Thursday or Good Friday  
IV. Easter  
V. Whit-Sunday  
VI. Anniversary Festival of a Congregation  
VII. August the Thirteenth  
VIII. General Occasions  
IX. November the Thirteenth  
X. General Occasions
Conclusion

In this paper I have described the liturgical practices of eighteenth-century Moravian churches in America. These congregations enjoyed a rich and diverse worship schedule which included weekly worship cycles as well as celebrations of the major festivals of Moravian and universal Christian Church. The worship style of these Moravians was unique and required a congregation-wide commitment to perform the liturgies properly. Due to changes in society at-large and within the Moravian Church itself during the nineteenth century, these older models of liturgical worship no longer met the needs of the church. Beginning with the *Offices of Worship* and the 1876 hymnal project, the American Moravian Church set forth on a new course of liturgical worship that was meant to overcome the difficulties nineteenth-century congregations were encountering while simultaneously reintroducing the diversity in worship that had been lost in the prior decades. The introduction of seasonal liturgical services and communion liturgies marks a significant change of course in the liturgical practices of the Moravian Church which continues to this day. The modern *Moravian Book of Worship* is different than any other Moravian hymnal around the world because it developed from the work done on the hymnal of 1876 which dealt with problems and needs specific to American congregations. More study of the work that went into the 1876 hymnal, especially in terms of the creation of the seasonal liturgical services, is warranted, as the debt that the modern Moravian Church owes to this innovative and unique hymnal has not been fully appreciated. I hope that this paper and further research in this area will enrich our knowledge of and increase our appreciation for the Moravian liturgical tradition past, present, and future.
Explanation of Liturgical Services

For this thesis project I have recreated several liturgical services of the eighteenth-century Moravian Church. My goal was to produce liturgies from our past that could be performed by modern church choirs and congregations. It is important to note that I am not attempting to create critical editions for historical research purposes, but to recreate these services in a way that is both faithful to the historical practices but usable in modern congregations. In order to accomplish this, I am using texts from the Liturgic Hymns of the Unitas Fratrum printed in London in 1793. These texts were translated from the original German for use in English-speaking Moravian congregations, and the English-speaking American Moravians used resources from the English Moravian Church for their liturgical resources.

It was not customary during the eighteenth-century to print music with the texts as most worshipers new the tunes from memory. In order to make the liturgies more accessible to modern users, I have joined the text with music in my editions. Many of the tunes called for in these liturgies are not present in modern hymnals, so I have relied on common tune books that were used by Moravians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Christian Gregor’s Choralbuch (1784) and Peter Wolle’s Moravian Tune Book (1836). All of the texts and music contained in this collection of liturgies were taken from sources known to be commonly used by Moravians during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While Wolle’s tune book contains music for all four singers’ parts, Gregor’s Choralbuch includes only the melody and figured bass, so I have provided realizations of the alto and tenor parts from the figures that are consistent with modern settings of these chorales.
Because these liturgical hymn services were sung antiphonally, I will use the following abbreviations to indicate the singers: L, leader or liturgist; B, brothers (men); S, sisters (women); C, congregation; Ch, choir; A, all. I will discuss other features of the individual liturgical hymns below.

It is hoped that these arrangements will be of interest and use to modern congregations and musicians. I am not aware of these services being performed antiphonally with music in this country in centuries.

I. Te Agnum

I chose to arrange the Te Agnum because it is specifically mentioned as part of the regular weekly liturgy schedule during the eighteenth century, and is mentioned numerous times in the Bethabara Diary. It was the first liturgy prayed by the Moravian settlers upon arriving in Bethabara in 1753.

I used the tunes specified in the Liturgic Hymns collection, with the exception of the final stanza. The Liturgic Hymns liturgy uses the same tune for the final three stanzas; however, the German liturgy (Liturgische Gesaenge der evangelischen Bruedergemeinen, 1823) specifies that the concluding stanza be sung to T. 235. This is nice as the liturgy begins and ends with the same music, creating a balanced effect. I have also used the rubrics indicating the antiphonal singing parts from the German edition, as it is clearer than the English version and includes more antiphonal singing between the choirs.

The liturgy opens with two stanzas with the tune T. 235. This tune is commonly used in the eighteenth century, and is best known as the music for the Te Deum. The tune is separated into five parts. The liturgy does not specify which parts are to be used, but I have chosen the portions that best fit the meter of the text. Tunes 235 and 22 L were
taken from Wolle’s tune book with all four parts provided. Tunes 22 A and 22 D were taken from Gregor’s *Choralbuch* so I have provided the alto and tenor parts.

II. The Trisagion

Another liturgical service prayed weekly by the Moravians was the Trisagion. This liturgy was interesting to arrange for several reasons. The *Liturgic Hymns* edition calls for Tune 4, which I was able to find in Wolle’s tune book. The first eight stanzas are set to this tune, alternating between the liturgist, choir, and congregation. I used the singing cues from *Liturgic Hymns* for the antiphonal singing. Because this is a metrical translation from the German, the text meter is not always perfectly aligned with the music. It is apparent that the English-speaking singers were comfortable with this. With some practice, it is not that difficult to get used to. I have placed the text with the music as-is, without adding any musical notation to adjust.

The final stanza is curious in that it does not fit the meter of the previous eight stanzas, but no separate tune is listed in either German or English hymnals. The “Amen, Hallelujah” was used throughout the liturgy books examined, often preceded by texts with identical meters. The music to accompany “Amen, Hallelujah” is found at the end of Tune 249. It turns out that the preceding two musical phrases in that tune fit the meter of the text exactly. I could be that the congregation simply new to go to that melodic phrase any time the stanza appeared in a liturgy. It is not possible to know for sure, but this technique seemed to work well in this case, and that is how I have arranged it here.

In many of the liturgical hymns, it works out that the tunes are in the same or very closely related keys, which is useful because there is no indication of any introductions or modulations between stanzas. The key of Tune 249 did not match well with the key of
the opening tune, so I have transposed it to a more closely related key. Although there is a key change, all four parts begin the final stanza on the same note they ended Tune 4 with. The bass simply steps down to the flattened seventh, almost as if the music were naturally modulating to tonic from dominant. It works well, and is a smooth and fluid change.

III. Most holy, blessed Trinity

This liturgical hymn is fairly simple to perform. The structure of the liturgy alternates between stanzas from two hymn tunes, T. 97 and T. 208 (part 2). The latter is the familiar German tune Jesu, meine Freude. What is striking about performing this liturgy is the alternation between the two hymn tunes. Basically, Tune 97 is sung by the congregation. It is in a major key and somewhat light-hearted in mood. Between congregational stanzas, the leader and choir interject with Tune 208 which is in a minor key, and much darker than T. 97. This gives a nice antiphonal effect between both congregation and choir, and major and minor keys.

The text and choir cues were from Liturgical Hymns and the tunes were taken from Wolle’s tune book. T. 97 was in the key of G-major as printed here. Wolle had printed T. 208 in the key of d-minor, which is not a related key, so I have transposed the music to e-minor to fit with T. 97.

IV. Te Abba

This was the longest of the liturgical hymns that I edited. It begins and ends with texts set to T. 235 (Te Deum). The music for this tune, along with T. 22 L and 22 O, were taken from Wolle’s tune book. Tunes 22 A, 22 B, and 22 D were taken from Gregor’s Choralbuch and alto and tenor parts consistent with modern usage were used. Tunes 22 B
and 22 O were transposed to keep similar key signatures with the other tunes in the liturgy. For clarity the singing cues given are from *Liturgische Gesänge* (1823).
REFERENCES


Wolle, Peter. Moravian Tune Book, arranged for four voices with accompaniment for organ and piano; to which are added chants for the church litany, and a number of approved anthems. 1836. Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Publication Office, 1880. Print.
VITA

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