

Message from Pastor Sue

Contributed by Rev. Sue Koenig
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Dear
Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Every six years, our Moravian Unity meets in Synod with representatives from all our 19 world-wide provinces. Most recently Unity Synod was held July 27-August 9, 2009. There were twelve resolutions passed by Unity Synod; two specifically addressed violence against women. Resolution 1: Education begins, "Whereas violence against women continues to impact upon women and families in our Provinces;" and Resolution 8: Advocacy begins, "Whereas violence against women in the Unity continues unabated and has a negative impact on women, children and family life in the Unity..." Along with these two resolutions, a third addresses the "measured community impact" of "issues of physical and psychological hardship due to poverty, continual threat of natural disasters, gender inequality, violence, economic distress, etc." The Resolutions call upon all Provinces to seek ways to address these issues and implement plans of action; they direct all Provinces to adopt a policy that mandates training in pastoral care, including training to recognize and appropriately address violence against women and children. In the thirty days I was in Rajpur, India, two women were burned to death by their husbands' families because the husbands thought the dowry the women's families had paid was too small. I also became aware through observation, and a book by David Batstone entitled, *Not for Sale*, that there are 27 million slaves in the world today. Addressing the United Nations in 2003, President George W. Bush said: "800,000 to 900,000 human beings are bought, sold and forced across the world's borders each year; a thriving slave trade that targets vulnerable women and children." The May 2010 Ohio Council of Churches Newsletter stated: "A new report conducted by the Trafficking in Persons Study Commission found that 1800 people are trafficked in Ohio every year. This includes 800 immigrants who are exploited in commercial sex and factory work as well as 1000 American-born children who are forced into prostitution. Our Unity has called upon all our provinces to address issues of violence against women and children which continues unabated throughout the world. I pray that we, and the 2010 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province, will respond with urgency and action to the concerns of Unity Synod and in support of women, children and men in all our Provinces.

Pastor
Sue