

# MORAVIAN MUSIC FOUNDATION

## Finding aid for Bethania Collection

Date range: 1780-1840

Bulk dates: 1780-1810

Finding Aid created by Nola Reed Knouse, March 27, 2019

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Creator: Bethania Congregation, Moravian Church in America, Southern Province (Salem, now Winston-Salem, NC).

Extent: 4 boxes, 5.7 linear feet

Abstract: The Bethania Collection contains manuscript parts for instrumentally accompanied solo and choral works performed at regular and special church services at Bethania, North Carolina. The majority of the pieces are by Moravian composers, but the collection also contains a significant number of works by other composers. Some manuscripts were formerly owned by the Hope, New Jersey, Moravian community which was disbanded in 1805.

Call number: SCM – Archie Davis Center Vault

Language: The material is in German, with a few works in English.

### **Access and Use:**

Acquisition Information: These materials are in the custody of the Moravian Music Foundation from the Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, NC.

Access Restrictions: The record group is open to research.

Copyright: Copyright is with the Moravian Music Foundation

Cite as: [item], Bethania Collection [number], Moravian Music Foundation.

History: Bethania, North Carolina (founded 1759), was the second intentional community established in North Carolina by Moravian settlers who came primarily from Germany by way of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, along with some non-Moravian local inhabitants who were permitted to live in the community. The first such community, Bethabara, was founded in 1753. The third such settlement, Salem, was always planned as the permanent center of Moravian lands in central-western North Carolina; its building was begun in 1766, and the Moravians' central North Carolina administration was moved to Salem in 1771. Bethania and Bethabara did, however, continue to exist, and there remains an active Moravian congregation in each location today.

Worship services structured life in Bethania, as in all other Moravian settlement congregations in the eighteenth century. Devotional meetings for small groups or the whole community occurred several times daily. In smaller assemblies hymns might be sung without accompaniment. Three services involved music in special ways. Sunday morning preaching services included liturgies according to the Lutheran liturgical year, usually along with one or two anthems and congregational hymns.

The *Singstunde* was the most characteristically-Moravian order of worship, instituted by their patron Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf within the congregation at Herrnhut, Germany; the worship leader chose from various hymns individual stanzas that combined to craft a unified message. Since the liturgist began singing each stanza without announcement or printed order of worship, the congregation's ability to participate relied upon their familiarity with hundreds of stanzas. The Moravians sang hymns daily and read and memorized hymn texts as a spiritual exercise, using printed hymnals at home for devotion but not during worship. The organist was also expected to identify the tune, and also to play in the same key in which the leader was singing, using his memory and ear. The *Singstunden* were held weekly as well as on special occasions, and could include a choir anthem. A sermon and the reading of the *Gemein Nachrichten* (congregational news from other settlements) might also be a part of the *Singstunde*.

The third type of service using music extensively was the Lovefeast (*Liebesmahl*). Modeled after the early Christian practice of expressing *agape* through sharing a simple meal, the Lovefeast includes the sharing of a beverage and bread during the worship service. Lovefeasts were held (and continue in many Moravian congregations today) to celebrate Christian feast days, Moravian festival anniversaries, and many kinds of special occasions, which could include birthdays, weddings, the arrival or departure of guests and members, funerals, anniversaries, and so on. The musical portion of the Lovefeast often took place at the end of a longer service which included preaching. Most of the sacred vocal music written by Moravian composers was written for a Lovefeast or other special celebration.

Texts and musical selections for a Lovefeast were compiled into an order of worship known variously as a *psalm*, *cantata*, or *ode*, or in German, *Dankgesang* or *Lobgesang*. These odes included biblical texts, often fragments from many different locations in scripture, quoted literally or in paraphrase; hymn texts, often newly-written or adapted for the specific occasion; and solos, duets, or anthems to be sung by the choir. The well-crafted ode develops

a unified theme, marked by harmony of language and thought; the music was intended to help carry the meaning of the text, not to stand on its own as an artistic creation.

In larger Moravian settlements (such as Salem), the anthems, solos and duets were accompanied not only by organ, but by an instrumental ensemble consisting primarily of strings, augmented by some wind instruments (most often flute and horns). By 1788 Salem is known to have had at least three violins, two viola, three cellos, a flute, two horns, and two clarini, all of which were used in worship.

Scope and Content: The collection consists of approximately 150 titles (some 1200 pages of manuscript music), all sacred vocal works, all in manuscript form. Some of these titles do not represent independent works, but are variant texts or *contrafacta*. Most of these manuscripts are thought to have come from the Salem Congregation collection, and several were formerly owned by the congregation at Hope, New Jersey, which was closed in 1805. Many of these were copied by Moravian composer Johann Friedrich Peter, who served the Hope congregation as pastor 1791-1793.

More than two dozen composers are represented, with the vast majority being members of the Moravian Church; those most widely represented are Christian Gregor (1723-1801), Johann Ludwig Freydt (1748-1807), Johannes Herbst (1735-1812), and Johann Friedrich Peter (1746-1813). Non-Moravian composers represented in the collection (many as *contrafacta*) include Karl Heinrich Graun (1704-1759), Johann Gottfried Naumann (1741-1801), and Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach (1714-1788). The composer is identified on the score for most of the pieces in the collection, and researchers have been able to identify the composer for many through other sources. However, a significant number remain without composer attribution.

There are no works in this collection in full score format. Rather, these are performance parts, and their condition indicates that they were used, with some having performance notations written in. More than a dozen copyists are represented, most frequently Johann Friedrich Peter, Johann Christian Till, and Carl Anton Van Vleck (1794-1845), who served in Bethania from July of 1823 to October of 1826.

By far the majority of pieces include accompaniment by instruments other than organ, primarily string orchestra with some parts for winds, notably flute(s) and horns. Most contain organ parts either as *continuo* or as a form of reduced score, indicating that the music director (or composer) was most often at the keyboard. Many of the pieces do not contain a full set of vocal and instrumental parts (compared to other copies of the same works in other Moravian collections), with the exception of the ones sent from Hope, NJ; most of them seem to have full instrumentation, and were perhaps sent *in toto* when the Hope congregation closed.

Title:

- Bethania Collection

Corporate Names:

- Moravian Church in America, Southern Province (Winston-Salem, NC)
- Moravian Music Foundation

Subjects:

- Anniversaries
- Cantatas, Sacred
- Chorales
- Choruses, Sacred (Mixed voices) with orchestra (or chamber orchestra)
- Christmas music
- Duets
- Epiphany music
- Opera--Excerpts
- Oratorios
- Pentecost Festival music
- Psalms (Music)
- Responses (Music)
- Sacred dramatic music
- Sacred songs (High voice) with chamber orchestra (or orchestra)
- Sacred songs (Low voice) with chamber orchestra
- Trios (of various kinds)
- Watch night--Songs and music
- Moravian daily text: September 19, 1750 (for example)

- Children's Festival (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries
- Older Girls Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc.
- Single Brothers Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc
- Single Sisters Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc.

### **Related Materials:**

Researchers interested in this archive may also wish to consult the following resources:

*The Music of the Moravian Church in America*, edited by Nola Reed Knouse. Rochester, New York, The University of Rochester Press, © 2008.

*Catalog of the Salem Congregation Collection*, edited by Frances Cumnock. Chapel Hill, North Carolina, The University of North Carolina Press, ©1980.

*GemeinKat*, online catalog of the Moravian Music Foundation.

<https://moravianmusic.on.worldcat.org/discovery>

Search for the collection by title: ti=Bethania Books Collection. Closely related in provenance and contents is the Salem Congregation Collection; search by title: ti=Salem Congregation Collection.

Other materials in the Archives and Foundation holdings may relate to the topics in this archive. See the archivist for further research assistance.