



**Finding Aid
of the digitized records of
Congregational Records and Memoirs
c. 1750–1884**

**Lanie Yaswinski
2025**

Reference Code

A (for Archives)

Title

Congregational Records and Memoirs (digitized records)

Dates

c. 1750-1884

Level of Description

Item level, organized chronologically

Extent and medium of the unit of description

18 folders found in four boxes (Box 6 Moravian Missions, Box 28 English Documents, Box 29 German Documents, and Box 37 Business Books & Ledgers)

Name of Creator

This collection of congregational records and memoirs was composed by a number of unknown authors and assembled by the Moravian Historical Society.

Administrative/Biographical History

Moravians first arrived in Pennsylvania in 1740, establishing the settlements of Nazareth and Bethlehem, from where they coordinated mission efforts to evangelize Native Americans in the surrounding region. In the years that followed, they went on to establish more congregations throughout eastern Pennsylvania and the neighboring states of New York, New Jersey, Ohio and Maryland in the Northeast. The congregational records in this group are associated with these Northeast congregations.

The tradition of writing a memoir is used by Moravians to record a person's spiritual journey through life and, historically, was read at funerals and then kept in church diaries or a collection of church records. Memoirs of significant Moravians (ministers, missionaries, choir leaders, etc.) in the past were copied and distributed through the *Gemeinnachrichten* [congregational accounts, like a newsletter] to other congregations.

Archival History

The Congregational Records and Memoirs record group is an artificial collection with unknown provenance assembled and organized to facilitate its management or use. At this time, it is not clear how this material came to be deposited at MHS. In the past, it seems that the collection was organized at the item level by staff or volunteers according to general subject matter, and then numbered sequentially and placed into boxes

according to subject. The collection was digitized with its current numbering system over a number of years, with digitization completed in 2023. In order to improve accessibility and enhance descriptions, Lanie Yaswinski was hired in August 2023 to edit the database entries and create finding aids for these digitized collections.

Scope and Content

This collection is an assemblage of unrelated congregational records dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, mostly concerning the congregations of Bethlehem and Nazareth and its environs. It includes diaries, memoirs, bills, cemetery records, lovefeast records, etc.

System of Arrangement

The records were previously organized at the item level according to general subject groups. Since the records were digitized with a sequential numbering system, the physical system of arrangement remains intact. To improve accessibility and establish intellectual control over the subject group, records are organized chronologically in the finding aid.

Conditions governing access

Unrestricted

Conditions governing reproduction

Researchers may access these records in person through appointment at MHS, or alternately may request digital reproductions. Contact MHS for pricing and policies regarding reproduction, copyright and permission to publish.

Language/Scripts of material

German, English

Physical characteristics and technical requirements

Ink or pencil on paper

Finding aids

PDF on website and printed finding aid in reading room

Existence and location of originals

Original records stored in the Archives Room, the Moravian Historical Society

Related units of description

Related material and original sources for some records may be found in collections at the following institutions:

- Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, PA (MAB)
- Unity Archives, Herrnhut, Germany (UA)

Archivist's note

Finding aid created by Lanie Yaswinski, 2025

Rules or Conventions

DACS; ISAD (g)

Dates of description

Previously arranged and described by MHS staff or volunteer "A.K." in the past. Digital entries revised by Lanie Yaswinski, 2023-24.

CITATION INSTRUCTION:

Moravian Historical Society in Nazareth PA, Manuscripts and Notes + A(number) i.e. A123.

For shortened citations use MHS for the repository and the reference number, (i.e. MHS A###).

Object ID	Name/Title	Date/Notes
A647	Handwritten note concerning the arrival of people from Barby, Saxony, wishing to come to Bethlehem	18th cent.
A641	Copy of witness signatures at a marriage ceremony [fragment]	18th cent.
A675	Boys' Festival Liturgies [Knaben-Fest] from Nazareth Hall and Christian Springs	1766-1818 Includes excerpts from congregational reports [Gemeinnachrichten]
A656	Extract from minutes of the Provincial Helpers Conference in Bethlehem, regarding the construction of a Single Brothers House in Nazareth	April 22, 1772
A740	Bills of the American Sustentations Diaconie	Bundle 1: 1785-1817, Bundle 2: 1818-1847
A753	Nazareth Lovefeast ledger [Liebesmahl Cassa]	1795-1801
A673	Proposal regarding how to estimate future care costs for retired persons, Carl Friedrich Reichel	January 10, 1813
A648	Records regarding Schoeneck God's Acre, including map, 19th cent.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft of Schoeneck churchyard, surveyed by Ernst Ludwig Hazelius, and accompanying map, September 9, 1807 2. Document regarding the layout of Schoeneck God's Acre, June 26, 1814 3. Agreement for purchase of land for Schoeneck God's Acre from Benedict and Elizabeth Benade, December 14, 1831 4. Memorandum from George Golkowsky regarding layout of Schoeneck God's Acre, Nazareth, August 8, 1809 5. English translation of 4 6. English translation of 2
A749	Records related to Nazareth Moravian cemetery, 1860s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Old Graveyard ... Monument" list of expenses 2. Contribution to the old Graveyard near Nazareth. List of names and amount of donation 3. "Miss Henrietta Michler, Mrs. Anna M. Sitgreaves, \$25.00" 4. Receipt of money given to M.H.S., signed Robert Haas 5. Lists of donors to the M.H.S. and for unknown objects 6. Handwritten note in German 7. List of names followed by a dollar amount 8. Contributions to the M.H.S. to be used for a monument to improve the graveyard 9. Statement of Expenses of Old Graveyard at Nazareth, Pennsylvania. \$1041.88 10. Notes in German. July 4, 1864, May 2, 1864, May 13, 1861 (from Board of Trustees) 11. Letter to the Executor's Board of the Historical Society from Edward Kruger, dated January 7, 1905 12. Signed petition
A640	Petition of choir members in unnamed church to Board of Trustees for carpet and chairs, [Nazareth congregation?]	n.d.
A621	Diary of Philadelphia IV	1872-1881 "Diary of the Bethlehem Moravian Mission Chapel, Hancock St. above Dauphin, Philadelphia PA" kept by Rev. William H. Vogler
Memoirs		

A62	Memoir of Andrew Albright (1718-1802)	From the Archives of the Lititz Moravian Church. Enclosed: Letter from Laurence Brickenstein, Lititz PA, great grandson of Andrew Albright, who sent the memoir to John W. Jordan of Philadelphia on December 18, 1893. Back page: List of children of Andrew and Elizabeth Albright
A72	Memoir of David Zeisberger (1721-1808)	Composed by John Heckewelder
A672	Memoir of Benjamin Rudolph Reniere, died in Nazareth, January 9, 1810	A Moravian student at Nazareth Hall, whose parents served in Hope, Lancaster and Nazareth
A617	Memoir of Rebecca Bucher, April 14, 1833 - November 14, 1858	She was a member of the Arabian Church, Sharon, Ohio. Buried by Eugene Leibert at Stone Creek Church
A683	Notes taken from the memoir of Hermine Therese Matschat (d. 1884 Gnadau), including genealogical notes regarding the Matschat family	Copied excerpts from the original