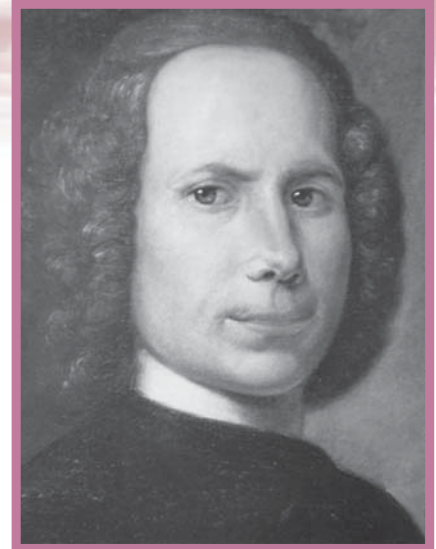


Moravian messenger



October
2013

Drawings of Grace Johann Valentin Haidt



Sr Margaret Connor writes:

A letter in the March 2013 'Messenger' from Br. Quildan, minister of the Fetter Lane Congregation, and his June 'Spotlight on Fetter Lane' reminded us that 2013 is the 275th anniversary of the start of the Fetter Lane Society, which led to the formation of the Moravian Church in England

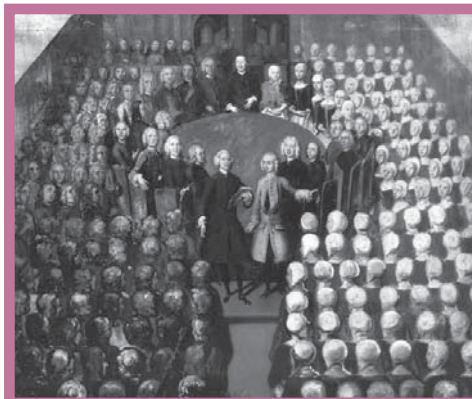
In our Fulneck Archives is a rare copy of a memoir by the goldsmith and painter, Johann Valentin Haidt (1700-1780), a member of the Fetter Lane Society. Coincidentally I worked on this memoir last year, for a talk, later extended into a small booklet. Valentine (the English form), is accepted as the foremost artist of the Moravian Church, with links to the wider art world. He was brought up in German Palaces, where his father worked as court goldsmith, including the Dresden Court to which Zinzendorf came a few years later.

Young Valentine was much influenced by his Lutheran mother's daily prayers, and writes that as early as five he felt 'drawings of grace.' He was a star pupil at the newly opened Berlin Academy of Arts, which fired him with thoughts of painting. Following his father's wishes, however, he completed his training as goldsmith before working his way around Europe. In 1724 he reached London, set up in business and married. He also started a small drawing school on the second floor of his home and took another goldsmith, George Moser, as partner. When the London Royal Academy opened, Moser became its first Keeper.

The spiritual fellowship at the Fetter Lane Society seemed like a homecoming to Valentine after all his wandering. Br. Quildan, with reference to Colin Podmore, prompts us to the

significance of this small group attended by key figures of the coming Evangelical Revival in England which was to sweep the country like a great tidal wave. There were even wider links to the Great Awakening in America.

I was struck anew by the quiet commitment of James Hutton, bookseller, publisher and early prime mover in the Fetter Lane Society. At the heart of the metropolis, with much evil around, he was truly 'in the world yet not of it.' He was also a friend and informal advisor on printing to George III, who was known for his interest in the Arts. Valentine, too, was fully aware of what surrounded



Moravian Synod of 1750

him in the London world. Later he painted an endearingly homely portrait of Hutton's wife, Louise, in Moravian dress and holding her knitting on four needles with a 'spare' in the German way. Louise's brother, Abraham Brandt, was a Moravian artist chronicling the Renewed Church, as Haidt did.

Among the earliest members of the Society were three Anglican priests who were all prominent in the coming Revival and must have known Haidt:

Benjamin Ingham and John and Charles Wesley. Ingham went on to join and serve the Moravians in Yorkshire. Also attached was the German, Frederick Hintz, maker of fine furniture and high quality musical instruments, appointed 'guitar maker to the Queen', whose furniture is displayed in museums today. Hintz, known to Haidt, accompanied the three Anglicans, plus others, on an historic visit to Herrnhut in 1738 and then later Hintz went on to evangelise in Yorkshire.

At Haidt's introduction to the Society, at a Lovefeast, probably early in 1739, he found 'a number of brethren assembled who received me in love. Br. Molther played upon the harpsichord and sang at the same time, the fine hymn, "The Saviour's blood and righteousness" .with such a sweet emphasis that it pervaded my marrow and bones. We kissed one another when my behaviour was like Joseph making himself known to his Brethren'. The hymn by Zinzendorf had only just been written. It is in our 1969 hymn book, one of several of the Count's translated into English by John Wesley. The ordained Philip Molther was formerly tutor of music to Zinzendorf's son, Christel, at Jena University, from where many were drawn to the Brethren at Herrnhut. Molther and other Society members were frequent visitors to Haidt's London home.

continue inside

Valentine decided that he wanted to spend his life in fully fledged Brethren's settlements in Germany so he left London in May 1740, shortly before the split with the Wesleys. He joined Herrnhag, the second Moravian settlement after Herrnhut. Here, with Frederick Hintz, he was in touch with the same vibrant. Spirituality, and met other Moravian artists and craftsmen of renown. By request, the church at Herrnhag was decorated by Haidt with large biblical paintings on the walls and ceiling. In 1752 he was recalled to London to carry out paintings for Lindsey House, Chelsea, which was owned for a time by the Moravians as the international headquarters. Two years later he was called to Pennsylvania where the bulk of his paintings were executed and where he died.

Valentine Haidt, absorbing the ambience of other Moravian artists, craftsmen and musicians, devoted his

talents lifelong to the service of his Lord. How does this speak to us today? Do we sometimes lose sight of the fact that any talents we may have, not necessarily in the arts, but in many directions of our lives, could be given us on trust.

In 2013 the major 200-page biography of Haidt by Br. Vernon Nelson was published posthumously by Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. I sent fliers of this to the National Portrait Gallery, the Royal Academy of Arts and Westminster College Oxford (each of which had some connection with Haidt), together with copies of my previously-completed 20-page booklet. Sr. Edna Cooper has available the back-number of the 'Moravian History Magazine' which describes the lost paintings of Lindsey House.

A word from the Editor

A harvest not our own

Noli timere, 'don't be anxious', 'there's nothing to be afraid of' was the Latin phrase that Seamus Heaney texted to his wife minutes before he died. It was a very modern and yet classical end for a poet born into Ulster rural society. When he became a Nobel Laureate in 1996 the Farmers' Journal coolly reported: "Bellaghy celebrates as farmer's son wins literary prize".

He never lost touch with his roots. His 1979 poem "The harvest bow" tells how his father wove and twisted the traditional bow from the last sheaf, and brought it home to the kitchen dresser. He continues: "The end of art is peace" as a motto for his frail copy of the wreath, recalling that his family home was in the midst of a county divided by politics, then violence, and yet it still remained neighbourly.

Heaney had a gift that meant that people from all walks of life, known and unknown, read his poetry.

Another gift was his generosity and humility, of a man at ease with ordinary people and world leaders.

Yet another gift was that spoke on the Troubles, on the ways in which we all colluded and the deep suffering some endured, while always indicating that there was a way forward. There may be a harvest here for the wider world.

There is the traditional harvest of the land which underpins our lives. Jesus frequently spoke of harvest, in a society where back-breaking labour determined how much could be eaten each year.

After the long, cold, spring, when the cattle were starving and food was imported into grassy Ireland, came a summer of sudden heat and sudden cold spells. Now the farmers are seeking to bring in what can be saved, the fruits of their labour, which will determine the food prices for the basics, those which the poorest in our society rely upon most.

In an international society, where food and power, ownership of the oil on which modern agriculture relies, and where famine and war are par of the world's lifestyle, how we treat God's produce and the price of the labourer, and how we share the produce, remains as relevant as ever.

The farmer's son from Bellaghy understood the biblical stories of fat years and lean.

Letter to Ed

Dear Sr Editor,

I wanted to thank you particularly for including the excellent article by David Bunney in the August edition. His piece entitled "Some thought on Preaching" is so appropriate and pertinent and needed in the current situation in our congregations that I do want to urge all our preachers, whether ordained or lay, that we read and re-read that page again and again and try to put it into practice.

I quote "To bring the Word to life, it must live within us, and be given that life through prayerful study and quiet preparation, always waiting upon God."

*With all good wishes,
John McOwat.*

Telling the Truth about Poverty update

The Report by the Joint Public Issues Team of the URC, Methodist Church and Baptist Union continues to generate discussion.

A response was made to the report by the Centre for Social Justice, and this has received a further response: see <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/response-to-centre-for-social-justice>

Meanwhile, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Housing, Rachel Rolnik, issued a press release on 11 September, ahead of her report on housing in the U.K. Most recently several reforms to the welfare system topped with cuts in grants for housing provision "appear to compromise the realisation of the right to adequate housing and other related human rights," she said. "The so-called bedroom tax has already had impacts on some of the most vulnerable members of society," the UN Special Rapporteur stressed. "During these days of my visit, the dramatic testimonies of people with disabilities, grand-mothers who are carers for their families, and others affected by this policy, clearly point to a measure that appears to have been taken without the human component in mind." The report will be presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2014.

YOUTH ZONE

Latest news from the Provincial Youth and Children's Office

Irish District Youth Weekend

For those already missing Summer camp there is an opportunity to get together again the weekend of 4-6th October in the Heritage Museum at Cultra. Details and booking forms will be available soon from Paul Holdsworth. Open to all young Moravians ages 9-17. The Irish District will organise transport from airports and make sure attendees get back to the right airport on time. Cultra is a fantastic location especially the sweetshop and an outstanding place to play the torch game. Contact Paul Holdsworth at Paul.Holdsworth@moravian.org.uk

Visitors sponsored by Chernobyl Children's Lifeline Charity entertained in Swindon



18-25 Weekend in Yorkshire!

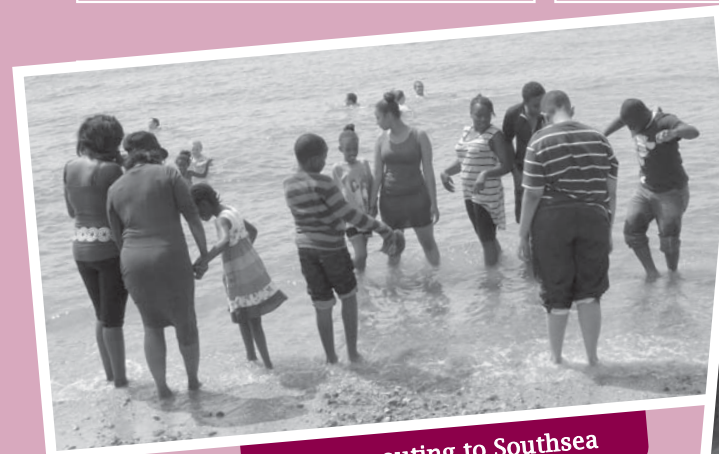
Hello everyone. I am pleased to announce that the weekend will now take place between 31st January - 2nd February 2014 and will focus on outreach.

Over the weekend we will look at the work of Inn Churches (a Bradford-based charity which provides shelter for the homeless during the winter months). On the Saturday night we will be going down to the project to cook the meal and see the work in

action. For more info about the project go to <http://www.innchurches.co.uk>...

But there will also be plenty of time to catch up with people, and meet new people. As well as looking at outreach this will also be a time of fellowship and so there will be other outings/activities.

For more information or to book a space simply email me on eleanor.hollindrake@hotmail.co.uk or tel 07835610925.



Summer outing to Southsea

Hornsey

Throughout the summer we had fortnightly youth evenings at Hornsey.

Young people also joined the two congregation outings. The group members commented:

The youth group at Hornsey gives us a chance to meet up and spend quality time doing fun things.

Its good we have a nice time as the youth come together and it's alright.

It is fun we do a lot of fun stuff, I like it.

We have fun we join together with our friends as a group and we choose our own activities

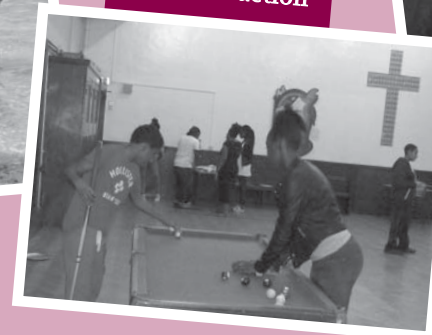
It is a good time to have fun and to be sociable.

Sue says: As one of the leaders at the Hornsey youth group we wanted to give the young people an opportunity to get to know each other and Jesus in a more informal way.

We wanted the young people to

set their own agenda and to choose activities and things to do which would engage and interest them. They are enthusiastic and willing to get involved, everything is accompanied by humour and fun, they are a unique group of people with many talents and really bring life into the church as we spend time together. Confirming that the family that prays and plays together stays together.

Youth in action



Meeting and sharing

Poverty and Childhood

There have been several reports about the effect of poverty on children in the UK published in the last few months in addition to 'The lies we tell ourselves' which Brother Holdsworth wrote about in the August issue.

The number of children living in poverty in the UK looks like it will continue to rise as the changes to the benefit system comes into effect. The majority of these children are from working families where the parents earn low wages and struggle to manage even with support from the state. The children in families where both parents are unemployed, or where a parent is disabled, or there is a disabled sibling are also suffering from the decrease in support for them.

The effects of poverty on children are long lasting and a poor childhood means that the long term health and welfare of the child is affected. The lack of available funds affect the child at school where they may not have money for trips and outing, cannot ask friends back to their home or enjoy the social activities other children take part in. They may choose to exclude themselves by not taking letters home because they are aware of the financial pressures at home. The impact of this may be the child becomes stigmatised and bullied by their peers.



A report by Family Action looked at the effect of poverty on birthday celebrations, something 94% of Britons consider an important part of childhood. The report used a variety of research methods to look at the issue. They found a substantial proportion of parents (44%) admitted to struggling to find the money for a child's birthday, and used a variety of ways to try to get the money including cutting back on household expenses, going without new clothes, saving for at least a month. 40% of the focus group of parents expected to pay at least £100 on a party, even though 41% of those were living on less than £100 a week. This brings into sharp focus the difficulty parents face, especially as they are motivated by a fear that their child may be bullied at school and to compensate for their own memories of missing out at birthdays.

Of course poverty has wider impact than effecting birthday celebrations and a recent report by The Children's Society looks at the effect of poverty on meals at school from a survey of teachers. 1.2 million school-aged children in poverty are not getting free school meals, 700,000 of those because they are not entitled because their parents work. The survey of teachers found that 72% experienced pupils coming into school with no lunch and no means to pay for one. 44% found children often or very often hungry during the school day. Another survey found 80% have had pupils arriving hungry without having had breakfast. For families in poverty the cost of school meals may be too much for their budget, and children may arrive at school with nothing for lunch and no money. Think of the impact £3 a day for 2 children makes on a budget of £100 and it is easy to see why children arrive at school without money for lunch. The 'Fair and Square' campaign is working to make school meals available



for far more children in poverty. Reduction of the stigma attached to having free school meals increases the uptake by those entitled to them. The introduction of cashless systems using card payments means it is more difficult to identify the children having free meals. However I was shocked to read in this report that children have to choose between having a desert and having a drink as the allowance for the meal is not enough for both. The importance of meals on concentration is well documented and the children disadvantaged by being poor should not be further disadvantaged by not having a meal at lunchtime. Much work has to be done in this area and some councils are moving forward by providing free meals for all children but this will be under threat as funds reduce in real times.

The final report on the impact of poverty on children is also produced by The Children's Society in association with The Contextual Theology Centre. This is a series of short essays to stimulate conversations about the theology of poverty and the current state of children living in poverty. A chapter on refugee families and the amount they are expected to live on highlights the severe poverty these families are forced to live in until their status is decided. These are families that have fled war, persecution and violence to seek a new safe home in Britain. The way they are treated by the state is less than welcoming and there may be a role for the churches to support these families.

The impact of poverty on children cannot be ignored. The target of no child in Britain living poverty by 2020 set by the government in 2000 now seems like an impossible dream as the number in poverty increases. We may not feel we can do much to help but involvement in campaigns, practical support for families, and action in schools and local government is all possible. The Children's Society has a template for you to send an email to your MP about free school meals, or you could write a letter to post. If you use Facebook many of the organisations campaigning in this area have a page for you to 'like' and will send you petitions as they are started. It could be helpful to find out what the situation is in your local school, perhaps if there is a need a church group could commit to: for example providing packed lunches to be used for those in need, or you could volunteer to help at a breakfast club or support it financially.

The 'End Child Poverty' group has an action page as well as lots of information and is worth looking at the site - www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

There is an organisation coordinating gifts of birthday cakes to families in need, something easy to do and could make a real difference to a child - www.freecakesforkids.org.uk



If you need more ideas, please don't hesitate to contact me, I can usually point you in the right direction. As Christians we try to 'love our neighbours as we love ourselves', perhaps we should rethink that to 'love all children as we love our children/grandchildren' and act as if we believed this was the way we should behave.

Joy Raynor



Further information can be found in 'FAMILY FORTUNES: Birthdays on the Breadline' <http://www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=24626>; 'Food for Thought' <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/tcs/food-for-thought-final.pdf>; 'The Heart of the Kingdom' <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/your-church/theology-and-heart-kingdom>; 'The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty' <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Truth-And-Lies-Report-smaller.pdf>. There are a wide range of other reports available online on this topic.

Just War?

As the Syrian conflict continues, Mike Haslam, Anglican priest, school chaplain and artist reflects on beliefs that underpin some of the international responses

Just War Theory

The Just War theory is a largely Christian philosophy that attempts to reconcile three things:

- taking human life is seriously wrong
- States have a duty to defend their citizens, and defend justice
- protecting innocent human life and defending important moral values sometimes requires willingness to use force and violence

The theory specifies conditions for judging if it is just to go to war, and conditions for how the war should be fought.

Although it was extensively developed by Christian theologians, it can be used by people of every faith and none.

Purpose

The aim of Just War Theory is to provide a guide to the right way for states to act in potential conflict situations. It only applies to states, and not to individuals (although an individual can use the theory to help them decide whether it is morally right to take part in a particular war).

Just War Theory provides a useful framework for individuals and political groups to use for their discussions of possible wars.

The theory is not intended to justify wars but to prevent them, by showing that going to war except in certain limited circumstances is wrong, and thus motivate states to find other ways of resolving conflicts.

'Just', or merely 'permissible'?

The doctrine of the Just War can deceive a person into thinking that because a war is just, it's actually a good thing.

But behind contemporary war theory lies the idea that war is always bad. A just war is permissible because it's a lesser evil, but it's still an evil.

Origins

The principles of a Just War originated with classical Greek and Roman philosophers such as Plato and Cicero and were added to by Christian theologians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas.

Elements

There are two parts to Just War theory, both with Latin names:

Jus ad bellum: the conditions under which the use of military force is justified.

Jus in bello: how to conduct a war in an ethical manner.

A war is only a Just War if it is both justified, and carried out in the right way. Some wars fought for noble causes have been rendered unjust because of the way in which they were fought.

Just War theory and Syria

If I have learnt anything about leadership it is that one of the hardest things is to do nothing, to watch and wait and pray. There are times when we need to speak out, for the sake of justice, whatever the consequences—but they are not nearly as common as we might wish, or think. We should also remember that whilst a war or conflict may be just, that doesn't mean that it is 'good'. It is rather the lesser of two evils.

The all-too-human impulse to act first and think later is a key reason why there is a need for code of conduct, a theology, to guide our actions. Although perhaps a pause to reflect upon and review Just War theory might also help to avoid some of our more destructive domestic rows.

The shadows of Iraq have darkened many of the discussions of the crisis in Syria, and the possibility of UK intervention. Any roadmap is better than none—and interventions such as Sierra Leone in 2000 and even Kosovo in 1998-1999 which had dubious legality but significant success, are not sufficiently well known. So we fall back to Iraq, whether we like it or not.

The preparations for intervention in Syria have mirrored the tragic history in Iraq—a reluctance to wait for evidence, an obstructive and destructive regime and opposition, and a divided international community.

There is greater justice in the cause for armed intervention in Syria than in Iraq—to prevent the on-going killing and displacement of civilians. Yet despite this, there are three principal reasons why I believe that Syria cannot yet be considered a Just War. Even after the failure of the G20, there is still potential for negotiations and the building of alliances—especially within the Middle East and the Gulf. This would also address the very real dangers of regional escalation. Even if the only other nation that is drawn in by international action is Lebanon, that would all but destroy the Just War condition that the response must be in proportion to the provocation. Yet the greatest reason to continue to watch and wait and pray is that to be a Just War we need to have a realistic chance of success, and we don't even know how to define a successful intervention in Syria, let alone how to achieve it in the context of a bitter, embedded and multi-layered civil war. As Paul Vallely has written in the Church Times on 30 August 2013, 'The outraged demand that 'something must be done' should not bully us into doing the wrong thing.'

India and Nepal: a diary

From July 10th -24th 2013 Brother Bob Hopcroft was in Nepal, then India, visiting the work there on behalf of the British Mission Board. This is the first extract from his diary. Later sections will be published in forthcoming editions of the Messenger



(photos left to right)

Holy Communion in Kathmandu
Br Ebenezer Gangmei in Kathmandu
Br Nagendra, Br Ebenezer with members of the Khokana Congregation
Playground equipment at the Pre-school

I set off on Wednesday July 10th for my first visit to India since 2011. I haven't normally travelled to south Asia in July as it is generally too hot and humid and it is the summer monsoon season too. However, because of other commitments this was to be my only opportunity.

Wed July 10th after a tortuous journey around the North Circular, I arrived at Heathrow for my overnight flight to Delhi with a connecting flight to Kathmandu.

Thurs July 11th After eight and a half hours, I arrived in Delhi at 06.00 with temperatures in the mid thirties and high humidity. My visa passed scrutiny and I spent the next three hours waiting for my connecting flight. The International Terminal in New Delhi was built especially for the Commonwealth Games in 2010 and is superbly modern and clean with its own M S and W H Smiths.

After a short 2 hour flight to Kathmandu I queued with back packers and trekkers to complete my visa application and hand over my £25 for entry into Nepal. I was joyously met by Br Nagendra and Chancha, the driver, who took the Christian name Peter when he was baptised. The minibus took me to the Everest Hotel for a two-night stay. After a quick wash and brush up, it was off to Br Nagendra's to meet up, once again, with his wife Kamelesworie and their son Joshua, who is now a strapping teenager who towers over his parents. Following a meal of rice, bean dhal and chicken and the incessant chatter of catching up, I was ready for bed. On the way back to the hotel the heavens opened and I experienced once again the torrential downpour which is the monsoon. The only saving grace was that it reduced the temperature a little.

Friday 12th As previously arranged, Br Shanti Pradhan picked me up to take me to the recently-acquired pre-school where Sr Vani awaited my arrival. After two years of ownership Sr Vani told me that the school is doing well, and the school year had started with 46 pupils which is expected to rise to 60 within a month. The walls are beautifully decorated with displays of the children's work and project work, and there is no doubt that a great deal of hard work is going on. I was able to view the two minibuses, one purchased by the Moravian Church

Foundation and the other by the MWA, PMF, the YPMA and the Mission Board, and was told that they are in daily use and have helped to improve the awareness of the school with their banners attached. Vani and Shanti were delighted to receive the donation of £500 from the MWA, which I was able to pass over directly and this will go a long way to provide schoolbooks for the coming year. After a two-hour meeting and an introduction to all the staff, I was then asked to distribute chocolates to all the children as it was their last day of term. Needless to say I proved to be a very popular visitor!

Next off to the village of Khokana, 10 km South West of Kathmandu, in the Lalitpur District where the population are Newari, and have their own language. We have a second congregation there, established 4 years ago, which is still growing rapidly as the only Christian Church in the village.

Whilst in Khokana I was also able to have a private meeting with Br Ebenezer Gangmei, son of Br Kabui, minister in Binnakandi, Assam. Br Ebenezer completed his theological training in 2012, supported by the MWA, and the Mission Board called him to serve in Nepal, at Khokana for a one year student placement. Br Ebenezer has thoroughly enjoyed his placement and has received great support from the brothers and sisters in Nepal and is now ready for his next call. I met with the Church Elders and, having made a throw-away comment about not having had time for a haircut before I left England, was treated to one by a member of the Khokana congregation who did a great job for 2000 R or just about £20. And a 1000 R tip.

The elders were keen to tell me that they held weekly prayer meetings, a weekly Bible study group as well as a house fellowship group. After a time of prayer I was chauffeured by Br Peter back to Kathmandu for a meeting with the Church workers and helpers of both Khokana and Kathmandu.

The main concern for the congregation in Kathmandu is that currently they have to meet in a library and would dearly love to have premises of their own, including a plot of land. However, land in Kathmandu is expensive, especially in the Baneshwor District which is where most of the congregation currently live and even identifying an available

plot has proved difficult. The several church workers, paid by the congregation, were keen to tell me about the men's groups the women's fellowships, the prayer and Bible study groups taking place in member's homes across the city.

It is an impressive list of Christians in action in a country where there is a good deal of prejudice against Christians, even if it is not open persecution. I wonder how many of us would stand up to the pressure of admitting we were Christian!

After a quick, late, evening meal I was ready for bed.

Saturday July 13th An early start saw me already 'suited and booted' for morning service with Holy Communion. With temperatures bordering on 40 degrees, a suit and clerical shirt don't go together too well, but 'when in Rome'.

As the congregation gathered, choruses with familiar tunes and unfamiliar words were sung accompanied by key board, drums and guitars. What a musically talented congregation they are. By the time the Khokana congregation had arrived, there were about 150 present for the Communion. My sermon was translated into Nepali and Newari, and after an hour and a half and a quick change into casual trousers and a short sleeved shirt, I was bundled off to the airport with many fond farewells. Kathmandu airport is small, crowded and dirty, with nowhere for respite from the heat, but at least my flight to Delhi was on time.

Food for thought - Harvest services

Harvest services started in nineteenth-century Britain. They were intended to bring to the people of new cities a sense of God's providing the food for the year, and our need to give thanks. The original services soon caught the imagination and developed into the integral part of the church calendar we have today.

Like all good traditions, the harvest thanksgiving developed to supply a need, and put a new 'take' on older practice. In those times, only rich city-dwellers had their own cooking facilities. Most people bought hot food from street-vendors, as in many cities across the world today. The link between the earth and God's provision, the yearly harvest, was no longer obvious.

Asking people to come, to decorate the church, was a way to give back some understanding to the scriptures about the Lord of the Harvest, the provider of our daily bread.

The decorations drew on the traditional 'harvest home' celebration, usually a harvest supper hosted by a farmer for his workers, sometimes accompanied by a gift. It was a way

of thanking them for the extra hard work the harvest entailed, and it celebrated the new cycle of food on which everyone, rich and poor, landowner or labourer, was dependent.

Another root was the ancient festival of the start of harvest, traditionally around the first of August.

This is still dominant in Irish folk tradition, as Lúnasa, the name of the festival itself and for the harvest month of August. The word was heard and transformed in Old English into 'Loafmass', (by comparison to Candlemas and Michaelmas), and this became Lammas, now remembered through Lammas fairs such as the famous one in Ballycastle, County Antrim.

This northern Pentecost, thanksgiving for the first fruits was combined with the end-of-harvest supper and the needs of city people to make this new autumn church celebration.

Practical ways to share followed. Our harvest giving is now needed more and more by our foodbanks as poverty soars in this land.

The Irish Methodist Conference 2013: A Call to "Wet Feet"

I was invited by the P.E.C. to attend the 244th Irish Methodist Conference in June as an observer for the Moravian Church. The Conference began with a service and the installation of J. Kenneth Twyble as Lay Leader and Heather Morris as President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the first woman to hold this post.

The theme for the week was, "A people invited to follow" (Joshua 3). Heather Morris told us: "We need to step out in faith and take risks, and get our feet wet."

This Conference was designed to create space for members to listen to God and to one another. An extra 350 people had been invited this year, all under the age of 30.

I spoke at the local preachers' Committee, explaining that the Moravian Church had adopted the 'Faith and Worship course and that we are currently updating it.

Churches were encouraged in the 'Home Mission' discussion to sign up to the 'Back to Church Sunday' as it has been seen to be effective. Dr Phil

Meadows from Cliff College Derbyshire spoke on the Wesleyan heritage and how to apply it today. A healthy church lies in making disciples, not in structures. Brian Anderson spoke on mission without spirituality being powerless and spirituality without mission pointless. Pete Grieg, a founder of 2407 prayer event, who also works on the Apha course internationally, spoke on how revival starts with personal encounters.

There was a heated debate on National Lottery Funding and a resolution to reject Lottery funding was passed with a large majority.

Kate Marshall led the Conference on 'managing change', why we fear it, and what hinders it.

There was time for worship and prayer. By the end of the conference there was a real sense that, 'There is no going back'. I left the Conference refreshed, renewed and uplifted. I felt encouraged to 'step out into what God is doing joyfully'

Patsy Holdsworth

Job-sharing: in life and faith

Management experts talk about 'life-work balance'. They talk about 'time management'. But if so much of your life overlaps with your work, and every day includes a substantial amount of 'grey area', you need a better, more flexible approach. (And we would prefer to say 'rainbow areas' rather than grey!) We (David and Zam) are married, we are both ministers of Word and Sacrament of the United Reformed Church (URC) and we job-share our pastorate - officially 50% each. And we are the parents of two children, one of whom has special needs.

So how do we manage? We could timetable our week rigidly with one working a Tuesday, another a Wednesday and so on, but that could end up so inflexible that it would be difficult to respond to the vagaries of ministry and the children's needs. Being aware of how our personalities work has enabled us to realise that we function best with flexibility.

It is also sometimes difficult to quantify what is work. Quite a bit of each week is in the voluntary support of the local church appropriate to any other church member. Is that work? Is going for a walk on the esplanade and pondering the sermon work? Is having a coffee with a congregation member when we have bumped into them in town work? We don't claim expenses for the money we spend at a coffee morning, but we are expected to do so as part of the leadership we exercise. Does it matter? As Iona Community Members, with a discipline of time, we struggle to answer.

As URC ministers, we promise not do a holy job, but to live a 'holy' life, (perhaps glad that this does not include, as for our Church of Scotland neighbours, a 'circumspect' one)

On occasion, we are very public people, which can be costly, where our convictions are at odds with other church members. For example, on equal marriage. Last year David was visible in television news reports outside the Scottish Parliament. (The clip was repeated throughout the year, implying that he was constantly at Holyrood!) But sometimes we also find unexpected support when we make a stand for justice issues, whether on traditional issues of social justice or the more controversial ones like assisted dying, when we offered space for discussion with a high profile activist.

We combine our callings as ministers, partners, parents, and seldom make absolute barriers between them. Our job-share, which has at times been a godsend for survival, also enables (let's not say 'frees') us to approach the idea of doing faith-based work properly. It would not be a good witness to neglect our family, nor to neglect our need to re-charge spiritual, physical and psychological batteries.

We might discuss theology on a day off, but if so, we

choose freely to do so. Sometimes David might spend quite a bit of this 'free time' making a film which later forms part of Sunday worship. If it's work, then it's creatively satisfying work without the pressure of being seen to be doing 'business'. Likewise, preparing free-church worship, with its high demands on creativity, is seldom a matter of sitting down with the computer. Prayers and inspiration need to germinate. One rule of thumb for David, is that he would not want to produce something that bores him. If he can interest at least one other, then we're moving. For Zam there has to be something that is intellectually engaging, but which challenges through everyday relevance, and keeps justice - the heart of the gospel - at the heart of life and faith and worship.

Then there are passions and interests: are these to be kept puritanically separate from the public witness of a minister? Hardly. Few things hold attention like the enthusiasm of a speaker with a message to share, by every means possible. David brought into his ministry apost-graduate electronic graphics training, and Zam the experience, both professional and personal, of coping with abuse and its after-effects, and living with cancer and the theological and pastoral impact this has had. And our autistic son's perspective of seeing the world through the lens of dinosaurs has challenged our own theology and fed the life of our congregations through the celebration of science as integral to faith. In our previous ministry in Brighton, ours was the only church involved in Brighton Science Festival.

So for us as the Manse family, our life and faith cannot be compartmentalised. Our children, lacking regular access to grandparents (only one is living and she is 300 miles away), relate to the family of the church. It is a natural extended family for them, where they are valued, but they have also learned that church events will not be set aside for their own timetable.

Involvement as members of the Iona Community has also reinforced this experience of family as that of relationships based on faith and care and shared purpose. This flexibility and sense of community has resulted in our son being far more adaptable than many autistic children, and both of them are involved with, and value, a wide web of relationships.

And God is never 'put away', because our faith is part of all we do. The day ends with a 'quiet time' with each one of us reviewing and giving thanks. We light a candle, yawn and pray!

Zam Walker is a URC minister in Greenock, near Glasgow

NAHUM

Little is known of the prophet Nahum. He is listed among the minor prophets in the Jewish Scriptures, but otherwise the name is not mentioned again in the Old Testament. The only other occurrence of the name is in the New Testament where he is mentioned as a possible ancestor of Jesus in Luke chapter three, verse 25.

The name is incorporated in Capernaum, which means literally, the village of Nahum, while the name Nahum means one who consoles. If Nahum was a resident of Capernaum, then he and Jonah and Jesus all lived and worked in the same area.

Nahum and Zephaniah lived at about the same time and both predicted the overthrow of Nineveh, capital of the Assyrian empire and centred in present-day Iraq. The Assyrian empire ruled supreme over the Middle East for about three hundred years, during which some of the most cruel atrocities were committed. The Assyrians were great warriors and whenever they conquered a nation, it was their policy to deport their captives to other countries where they would eventually lose their national identity and become more easily subjugated.

The empire was built on whatever the soldiers could loot from their victims but they struck terror into other countries by skinning some of their captives alive, cutting off their hands and feet, their noses and ears, gouging out their eyes and pulling out their tongues. This was all designed to instil fear into anyone who planned to oppose them. Consequently, no one shed a tear when the empire was eventually brought to an end by the Babylonians, just over six hundred years before Jesus was born.

It is the overthrow of Nineveh that Nahum predicted in his book, which begins with the words, 'An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book about the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.'

The exact site of Elkosh is not

known and Nineveh was so completely obliterated that its location was not discovered until the nineteenth century. Records of the Assyrian military exploits and accounts of how they tortured their prisoners, were among the items excavated at that time. These documents were written on clay tablets and so withstood the ravages of time and weather. Many are copies of ancient Babylonian literature collected by king Assurbanipal.

There is little in the way of religious teaching in the book of Nahum. The book is concerned with a single theme and that is the impending destruction of Nineveh, and the consequences of this for other nations, particularly for the oppressed Hebrews. This is described in vivid detail at times. In verse 10

**THE LORD IS GOOD,
A STRONGHOLD IN
THE DAY OF TROUBLE**

of chapter one the Assyrians are described as being destroyed like dried stubble. In Chapter three, verse 3, Nahum describes countless heaps of dead bodies with people stumbling over them. Such teaching about God as there is, is contained in chapter one, where the Lord is described as jealous and avenging when it comes to dealing with those who oppose him. In spite of his great power however, he is slow to anger, chapter one, verses 2 and 3. Most of the rest of the chapter describes the various ways in which God's power is demonstrated. The other aspect of God's character which is mentioned is in verse 7 of the same chapter, where the Lord is described as good and as a stronghold in the day of trouble, and who knows those who take refuge in him. Also in chapter two, verse 2, where the restoration of the majesty of Jacob or Israel is

promised because of the faithfulness of God's people.

It is sometimes difficult to know when the prophet is addressing the Assyrians and when he is speaking to his own people. He switches from one to the other without warning. An example of this can be found in chapter one, verses 11 and 12. In verse 11 we read that 'one who plotted evil against the Lord came from you,' obviously referring to Nineveh, but then in verses 12 and 13, we find the Lord saying, 'Though I have afflicted you, I will no longer afflict you, I will break his yoke and untie your bonds,' But verse 14 is again addressed to the people of Nineveh.

There is a theory that the book, as we know it, is only a part of Nahum's prophecy and that much of it has been lost. It consists of only three chapters. Verse 15 in chapter one, 'See on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news and publishes peace', can also be found in Isaiah fifty-two, verse 17, where the publisher of good news is described as having beautiful feet. The verse is partially quoted by Paul in his letter to the Romans, chapter ten, verse 15.

The reference to Nineveh being like a pool whose waters have dried up, in chapter two, verse 8, probably refers to the fact that the city was surrounded by canals and irrigation ditches which doubled as a form of defence. It was the river which brought about the destruction of Nineveh eventually. The Medes and Babylonians laid siege to the city for two years before a sudden rise in the level of the river, washed away a part of the city wall and the invading army was able to enter. It is claimed that this was foretold by Nahum in chapter two, verse 6 where we read that the gates of the river have opened and the palace tumbles down, and another event in chapter three verse 14, where the siege of the city is mentioned.

Peter Gubi

Congregation News

Kingswood

On the 18th August 2013 we hosted the Western District Rally here at Kingswood, it took the form of singing a selection of favourite hymns. The collection taken at the rally amounted to £108.25 and has been sent to Mōdcins Sans Frontiōres with a request that it be used for their work in Syria

Kay Huggins/Terry Cross

Leominster

A newcomer writes

We moved into this area from Zimbabwe almost 4 years ago, and one of the first tasks I set myself was to look for a church. My background is reformed church but ecumenical. I was ordained in the Congregational church and also served the Presbyterian church, so my logical denominational home is the URC. There isn't one in Leominster.

I didn't have to look far. From our back garden we can see the bell tower of this church and our back hedge abuts the church yard. The first day I attended, the church was full. I was impressed with the pipe organ and a choir was in the gallery. They even sang an anthem I had recently sung in Harare. Apart from the gallery, the size and furnishings reminded me of the church in the Midlands of Zimbabwe when we emigrated there from South Africa. So I felt quite at home.

I soon discovered that it was this church's 250th Anniversary. The choir specialised in travelling from one venue to another to help churches celebrate occasions, and most of the congregation were visitors. So the next week there was quite a contrast in numbers. However, I was welcomed with open arms and started attending the women's group and learning some of the hymns which are uniquely Moravian.

The church is still small. As fast as we acquire a new member, we lose another. Attracting young people is a particular problem. However, we have many visitors who live elsewhere but have links with this church and some of these are younger. The women's group also brings in visitors who occasionally come to church. Susan MacIlwaine helps to run all-age services, which the children in particular

CONGREGATION REGISTERS

WEDDINGS		
27th June	Sr. Catherine Martin and Br. Mark McAuley	Gracehill
DEATHS		
1st February	Sr. Beatrice Harper	Gracehill
1st August	Sr. Dorothy Mann, age 93	Tytherton

enjoy. Through the hire of the hall, we are in touch with other groups such as the University of the Third Age and the Women's Institute. So in a sense we are a 'church without walls'. We also contribute to Mission Aviation Fellowship and to the chosen charity of the MWA each year.

Rev. Colin MacIlwaine and I attend Churches Together Leominster which in turn organises several major events in Leominster, such as Celebrate Pentecost, the World Week, the Christmas Lights Service, and Lent lunches. This church takes an active part in these activities. Colin preaches for us once a month when he serves Holy Communion. Every 5th Sunday at the moment both he and Susan come through for the above mentioned all-age service. He also comes through for our monthly committee meeting, CTL bi-monthly meetings and visits to parishioners

I had heard of the Moravian Church through my study of church history, both Reformation and Southern African, so it was appropriate that I arrived in this church on such an historic occasion. We have a long proud history here and I am always being regaled with stories of the past, less so since Doreen Davies passed away. We miss her sorely, as she kept us in touch not only with the history of the Moravian Church but also the Moravian Church world wide, most specifically Labrador. I have made contact with the missions near my family home in the Cape, South Africa- Elim and Genadendal- and took the farming community there some clothing from our MWA.

So here we are, very much part of the historic, international Moravian Church, small but active and with great hope for the future.

Dilys Howard

C.S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis died on 22 November 50 years ago. An Oxford academic, he wrote Mere Christianity, The Screwtape Letters, a science fiction trilogy, Surprised by Joy, A Grief Observed, and much else, including, of course, the seven Narnia books.

If you are a fan (or the reverse) aged five to ninety-five and would like to submit a short article or review, please send it in, ideally by email.

Syria

Irish District churches were among those requested by the Antiochian Orthodox Church to set aside Sunday 15th September 2013 as a day of solidarity to support the humanitarian and relief work in Syria, a country with a substantial Christian minority and where the Civil War is causing great suffering.

Cliftonville

Congregation
assembling for
Embrace service

Between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday many of the congregation members were snowbound (the Seder meal usually held in the Church of Ireland was cancelled) but we were glad that Br. Charles Costley (from University Road) could join us to conduct the Easter Service. There were lovely flower arrangements and the large floral cross, which has become an Easter tradition, in the chancel

A number of members joined with representatives of other Moravian churches in the district on 4th May for a day-long interesting and useful discussion on the future of the Church.

The annual Pentecost service was held on Monday evening the 20th May when members of the Methodist, Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic Church joined us for a service and fellowship over a cup of tea.

Sunday 16th June Br. and Sr. Leonard Broadbent joined us for the Gift Day Fathers' Day service and lunch afterwards. Sr. Ina Pritchard is no longer well enough to attend church but we remembered she would celebrate her 102nd birthday two days later and sent her greetings. We appreciated sharing a lovely birthday cake provided for us by her family.

There were fifteen YPMA awards - one gold, 1 red, 2 purple, 3 green and 8 blue. £960 was raised. Our thanks



Easter floral cross

to the Sunday School children and teachers.

We hosted the 'end of the week' service after young people in the area took part in "Embrace Ballysillan" from 4th to 11th August, when they had Bible Study, Prayer walks, gardening for the elderly, street cleaning, visits to Residential Homes, a coffee shop and Community Fun day. The service was lively, Some of the young people gave accounts of the week and how it affected them an address was given by the minister of Ballysillan Presbyterian Church. It was good to see the church well filled with 110 young and older people from the various denominations, and that they lingered to chat over tea afterwards.

A box has been placed at the back of the church for gifts of non-perishable foods for the Trussell Trust, and instead of fresh fruit and vegetables to decorate the church for harvest, gifts of tinned food and rice and pasta etc. have been requested for the same cause.

Edna Cooper

Gracehill

After a long hard winter of frost and snow, our Holy Week Services were well attended each night. The early morning service on Easter Day started in the Church and then on to God's Acre where a silver band, organised by Sr. Linda Murphy, provided the music. Easter morning service concluded with a hearty breakfast cooked by Br. Trevor and Sr. Barbara Gillen and their team. The Family Service at 11 a.m. was enriched with Br. Sean Tranter on cornet accompanying Sr. Alison McCullagh on the organ and with the Youth Fellowship Choir. Our young people decorated a cross and this was brought into Church during the singing of 'The Old Rugged Cross' and was then placed in the Manse front garden. After the Service, the young and not so young took part in the Easter Egg hunt in the Square.

Prayers in Church on a Thursday morning were held during the six weeks of Lent and are still continuing.

The Y.P.M.A. Service was held during March and a record total was achieved by our young people.

Work with our young people continues and includes Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, Sunday School and Youth Fellowship.

On Saturday, 18th May we saw almost sixty ladies join together as Gracehill M.W.A. and their guests gathered together to enjoy a Spring Sisters' Breakfast. Sr. Sarah Groves explained that whilst a 'Sisters' Breakfast' was an old Moravian tradition, it had been many years since such an event had been hosted in Gracehill. The ladies were entertained by three members of the Youth Fellowship who sang 'Be Still for the Presence of the Lord'. The guest

speaker was Mrs. Pauline McCorriston who brought a powerful message under this year's M.W.A. theme 'Following in Christ's Footprints'.

A united Methodist and Moravian Service was held on Sunday, 26th May. The speaker was Rev. Kenneth Lindsay, President of the Methodist Conference in Ireland.

Children's Day was held on Sunday, 16th June when the guest speaker was Jackie Gilbraith from the Ballymena Methodist Church.

The Village Fair on 22 June was a huge success again this year and £9600 was raised. Thanks go to all those who helped but a special mention to Br. Raymond and Sr. Audrey Kitson who work tirelessly for months ahead planning this event.

During our service on 30th June, Sr. Rachel Hamilton told the congregation about her forthcoming visit to India where she will be part of a team working with children from age 3 - 15 years from the slum areas. We wish her a safe journey and all our prayers go with her and the team.

Congratulations to Sr. Sarah Groves and Br. Christopher Jones after the birth of their grandson George. Congratulations also to Br. and Sr. Thompson on the birth of their daughter and to Br. and Sr. McCormick on the birth of their son.

During the first six months of the year Br. Desmond Quate has conducted services in the absences of Sr. Sarah. Thank you Desmond.

Sally Weir

Dates to Remember

21 Oct **28 Oct** Week of Prayer for World Peace

Bible Sunday
www.biblesociety.org.uk

20 Oct **27 Oct** One World Week
www.oneworldweek.org

27 Oct

FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Provincial Diary for October

- 5 Provincial Fellowship Day Carrs Lane
- 6 12 Yorks. Dist Conference, Lower Wyke
- 11-13 Gracehill pastoral visit, Br Hopcroft
- 15 Church Service Advisory Board at Church House, The PEC
- 16 Faith and Order and Inter-church Relations Committee, Church House Br Cooper, Sr Groves
- 17 Finance Committee at Church House The PEC
- 19 Midlands District Conference at Leicester
Eastern District Conference Bedford QP
Irish District Conference at Ballinderry
- 23 Estates property meeting, Fulneck Sr Taylor Br Hopcroft
- 25 Consecration Service of Br McIlwaine at Hall Green, 7.30pm.
- 29-30 PEC BMB and Estates property Meeting. The PEC

On Friday October 25th Br Colin McIlwaine will be Consecrated as a Presbyter in the Moravian Church at Hall Green Church Birmingham at 7.30pm. The officiating bishop will be Br John McIlwain and the preacher will be Br Kenneth Evans. Would anyone attending who is not part of a congregation group please let Br McIlwaine know by October 18th. Please remember Br McIlwaine, Susan and family in your prayers as he is consecrated.

Sadly, Sr Beth Torkington retired from Full time Church Service, on ill health grounds, effective from September 15th, and she will be taking 6 months complete rest. Sr Beth hopes to be able to continue with her Episcopal duties, subject to medical advice, sometime in the New Year.

Please remember Sr Beth in your thoughts and prayers in the days ahead.

PRAYER NOTES

October 6th [Trinity 19] Luke 17:5-10

Light of the world, increase our faith. Remove from our minds all groundless and foolish beliefs. Inspire us with such thoughts as are true and wise and well-pleasing to you. From every error to which we cling, and every falsehood that deceives our hearts, deliver us and by the truth that only you can give, make us wise for salvation. Grant us the faith that rests not on signs and wonders but on your word. Strengthen the faith we have, so that with simplicity of heart we may trust in you alone and hold back nothing in serving you. Although we are unworthy servants may we do only what is our duty as we follow the faith once for all delivered to the saints, for you have the words of eternal life. Amen.

October 13th [Trinity 20] Luke 17:11-19

Saviour of the world, born of a Hebrew mother who sought refuge in Egypt—who rejoiced in the faith of a Syrian woman and a Roman soldier—welcomed the Greeks who sought you—praised the gratitude of the Samaritan leper and allowed a man from Africa to carry your cross—and whose great commission was to make disciples of all nations. We remember that we do not live by ourselves alone but are made from one blood together with every nation of mankind, to live on all the face of the earth. We thank you for the universal Christian Church—that in you there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male nor female. Pour on us your Spirit promised to all peoples, that we might live in harmony as brothers and sisters, serving you as fellow-heirs of your everlasting kingdom. Amen

October 20th [Trinity 21] Luke 18:1-8

Lord of Lords, who often waits beyond the time we hope for, but never beyond the time appointed by you—help us always to pray and not lose heart. Give us faith to see your guiding hand in all things for you alone have the wisdom to know what is best for us, the love to bestow it and the power to effect it. You have taught us that you are far more ready to listen than we are to speak. You hear us not because of our many words but for your loving kindness. You are the help of the helpless, the hope of those who are past hope, leading us by ways we do not always understand—through sorrow and joy, through victory and defeat. Give us faith to stay calm and undismayed amongst the turmoil of the world, knowing that you answer our prayers not according to our desires but according to our need, and that your kingdom shall come and your will be done, to the eternal glory of your Name. Amen

October 27th [Trinity 22] Luke 18:9-14

Merciful God, write deeply on our minds the lesson of your word, that only the pure in heart can see you. Forgive those sins which have such a grip on us that we no longer confess them to be sins and grant that we never deceive ourselves with the thought that we are better than others. Have mercy on us according to your steadfast love, for we would not, even if we could, conceal anything from you. Help us to strip off every mask and pretence as we come into your presence and to lay before you every thought and secret of our being that they may be forgiven, purified amended and blessed through the blood of Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen

Richard Ingham

THE MORAVIAN MESSENGER

Official Journal of the Moravian Church in the British Province. Published monthly by the authority of the Provincial Synod. Advertisements and all communications concerning distribution and supply should be sent to the Moravian Book Room, 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3JT, and sent to the Editor.



Editor: Rosemary Power, 51 Town Court, Shannon, Co. Clare, Ireland.
E-mail: rosemary.power@moravian.org.uk
Contributions for the Messenger should reach the editor by the 3rd day of the preceding month.