



## Ordination of Derrick James Purnell

### *Br Eric Moore writes:*

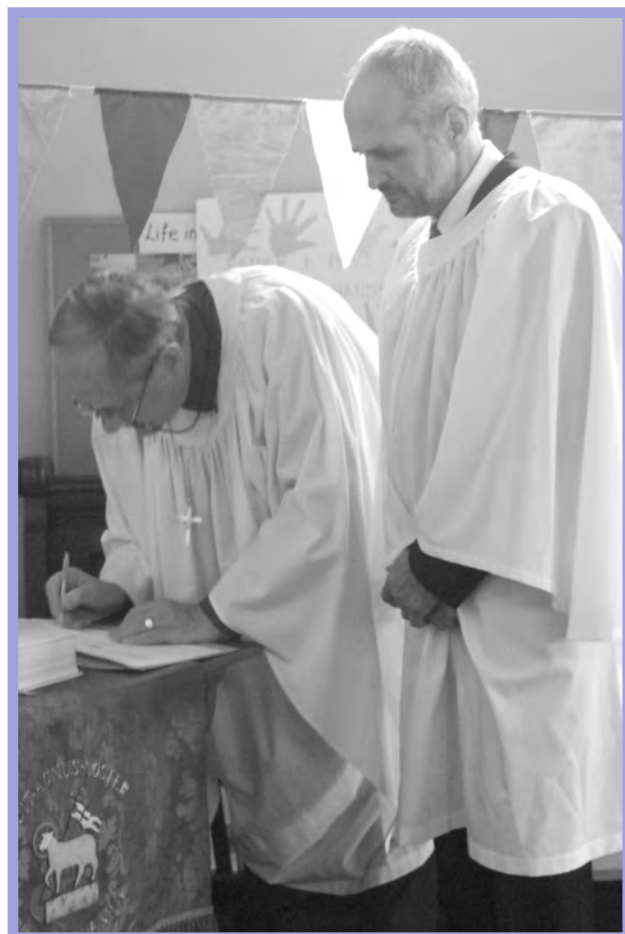
On Saturday 27 September 2014 at Bedford Queen's Park Moravian Church, Br Derrick Purnell was ordained as a Deacon in the Moravian Church. The service was presided over by the Rt Rev. John McOwat, with readings by Br Joachim Kreusel (Derrick's supervising minister) Bishop Elect, and Sr Gillian Taylor (Chair of the Provincial Board).

The address was given by Br Fred Linyard and was centred on the theme of 'the mind of Christ'. The service was well attended by the majority of Ministers and members of various congregations, members of other local churches and friends of Derrick's. It was a lovely sunny day with a generous buffet in the Sunday School Room afterwards.

Derrick was born in 1959 in Bristol and was a member throughout his youth at the Kingswood Moravian Church. Br McOwat reminded the congregation that he had christened Derrick when he himself was Minister at Kingswood and was now ordaining him - a first in his

lifetime, he thought.

Although Derrick's initial 25 years were spent in the fellowship of Kingswood Moravian Church, where his mother and maternal grandparents were also members, his path took a very different direction when he married Anita (née Packer) in 1987 at Westwood Moravian Church. Following their marriage they moved to Fairfield Square in Manchester and Derrick became a Sales Executive for a large Industrial Gas company. In 1988 they had a son James and in 1994 moved again to the settlement at Ockbrook where they had a daughter, Miranda. During this time Derrick felt a stronger and stronger call to the ordained ministry and finally gave up his secular job as a National Accounts Manager and was accepted for training in 2009. He completed a two- year course at St John's



Theological College in Bramcote, Nottingham and in 2011 received a call to serve the Baildon and Horton Congregations as a Student Minister. In 2013 the family moved again, following a call to the Bedford and Harold Road congregations, and they are currently living in Bedford.

We wish Br Purnell every success in his future ministry as he continues to preach the Gospel and follow Christ's teachings.



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### A Visit to Flanders Fields in 2014

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# Memories of George Hamilton IV

George Hege Hamilton IV (19 July 1937 - 17 September 2014)  
was an American country musician from Winston-Salem North Carolina.

## Br Colin McIlwaine writes

George Hamilton IV, who passed away on the 17 September, was for many years known as 'The International Ambassador of Country Music'. His career, which began in the 1950's, took him to many parts of the world and resulted in chart success, numerous singles and albums, television appearances (including his own series) and brought success, not only in country music, but also in the genres of folk and pop.

George never made any attempt to hide his strong Christian convictions and much of his later work had a specifically Gospel theme. He was always quick to mention his lifelong connection with the Moravian Church and was equally at home playing to the audience at the Grand 'Ol Opry or a small gathering in a church or hall. He was a gracious and humble man, who always loved to meet and greet after his concerts and had a friendly word for all.

For me, George was an artist whom I admired, a role model and, I am honoured to say, a personal friend. I had the pleasure of singing with him on a few occasions and such was the humility of the man, that he made it sound as if it was his privilege to sing with me, when it was very much the other way around. He has left behind a legacy of not only music and song, but the example of a life of faith and exemplary living, which made an impact far beyond the world of entertainment. My thoughts and prayers are with George's wife, Tinky and the family circle at this sad time.

## Sr Sarah Groves writes:

George Hamilton IV was a great Christian gentleman and a wonderful singer and entertainer, and I am deeply saddened to hear of his death. Chris and I first met him, many years ago, on our very first trip to Greenbelt, the Christian arts and music festival. We had no idea that he was a Moravian but we had heard of him as a Country and Western Singer so were keen to see him on stage. His set was really good and towards the end he called out 'Are there any Moravians here?' Of course we went wild, waved and shouted. We met up with him afterwards and he was so down to earth and with a wonderful southern gracious manner.

After that initial meeting we met him several times in Yorkshire performing at Fulneck and Lower Wyke. Our last meeting with him was in Ballymena performing at the Braid. A number of years ago he had performed at Gracehill Church and so last year he phoned the manse to say he was back in town and

would we like to go to see him at the Braid. He had been touring Ireland performing mainly at Churches and this was his last set before returning home. Of course we leapt at the chance of seeing him again and caught up with him again after the performance. His act was great, Christian yes but also full of gentle humour and warmth and a love of life and people.

Afterwards we had the chance to chat briefly and he was his usual gracious friendly self.

He will be missed!

## Br Kenneth Evans writes:

I first George at Heckmondwike Moravian Church in about 1987. He was at Church one Sunday for morning worship. He was rehearsing nearby before going to Border Television Studios in Carlisle for a broadcast. So he had called into the local Moravian Church for the service.

He asked me if I had a Moravian Watchword as he had left his in America, so I took it to him at the Black Horse at Clifton where he stayed when in Yorkshire.

He explained to me he was a Moravian, that his parents worshipped at Winston Salem, his home Church being Fries Memorial, Winston Salem, North Carolina.

Over the years we have met George in concert in Bradford, Grimsby, Worksop, Fulneck, Lower Wyke, and Mirfield.

On one occasion, for my fiftieth birthday, my son wrote to him and sent some money to buy a couple of C.D.s and invited George to a surprise party they were organising if he was in the U.K. George signed the C.D.s, returned the money and also rung up and sang a birthday greeting on the telephone because he was in Sligo in Ireland and couldn't be with us.

George has performed at Lower Wyke and at Wellhouse, with his 'Moravian Country Christmas' Thanksgiving and Easter concerts, as well as joining us for our united 250th anniversary service for Lower Wyke, Wellhouse and Gomersal.

George always said he was blessed to be able to sing and tour the world, and he wanted to give something back to God by offering his time and his talent to perform in his Churches.

George was a true Christian gentleman. He was gracious and kind and very humble, we have so many fond memories of him which space doesn't allow me to share. He will be sadly missed in the world of country music and within the churches he visited over the years. He was a true ambassador for Christ in every way.



## Calvary on a Mission Visit to Belfast



**Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young. But, be an example to all believers in what you say, in what you do, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)**

There are times in our lives that we speculate, organize, and plan for events, prayerfully hoping that every last detail



is in place. On 01 August, our eighteen-month planning process ended (or so we thought!), nine young people and five adults waited for a flight that left over three hours late. We made our connection (which was also delayed), to Belfast, and when it landed on time we practically ran, happy to have finally arrived.

Despite all the planning, checking, and double checking of the specifics needed, we were politely denied access to the U.K. The Border officials were convinced that we were there to 'work' though we were

not being paid, but were there to meet and join in projects with seven different Church youth groups. We sat for six and a half hours, while they did paperwork, made inquiries, and finally decided that we had to go home. We were given two days to enjoy the country and meet the people we had planned to share our time with. We were sad, exhausted, and overwhelmed, but we had learned and would continue to see the power of prayer and as our theme song for the week stated: **'When our God is for us, who can be against us?'**

We were met by **Embrace Ballysillan** leaders, John Scott, Rebecca Cooper, Aaron Hunter, and Eunice Hoey. **Embrace** was started six years ago by a group of dedicated youth workers, pastors, and laity from churches in the Ballysillan area of North Belfast. This year, Keeva Watson and Paul Holdsworth were our contacts prior to the trip, but there is a much larger group of leaders that put it all together. This season, young people and leaders from seven different congregations, plus children and young people from the Ballysillan neighbourhood, joined to celebrate God's love in North Belfast.

We pulled up at Eglinton Presbyterian Church where the whole crew had stayed to greet us, as we were to have joined them for an all-day training. The group lined the driveway and cheered as we arrived - they welcomed us as if we were old friends.

One of our young people, Spencer Cox, said that if we only had two days, then

we were to 'make every minute count'. We had decided that we would do everything we could to salvage the trip and create the relationships we were there to make, while the leaders continued to work on extending our stay. Over the next two days, we worked to change our status and on Monday afternoon after countless phone calls and many prayers, we were given permission to stay until Saturday, our original departure date.

Given our status, the week had to be rearranged a bit. We were not able to 'work' outside doing the planned street-cleaning. However, the Calvary young people decided that we would make Embrace our 'project' for the week. We cleaned after meals and projects that others worked on, led worship, sang and helped with games, Bible Study, and prayer walks. We brought songs from our beloved Laurel Ridge Moravian Camp in North Carolina. We interacted with the neighbourhood children and youth participants, helped lead a community day, and learned about a culture so different from our own. On three occasions we were given a cultural awareness tour of locations within the city. We were shown the Ulster Museum where we learned about The Troubles; we were given a tour of City Hall by Councillor Brian Kingston, where we learned more about the governance of Belfast and the United Kingdom. We were taken on a tour of the city by two police officers, who spoke on the divide between Protestant and Catholic



## Calvary on a Mission

Churches; and on the 95% of citizens trying to move from the chasm that has defined generations.

We had the opportunity to visit all the Moravian Churches: Cliftonville, University Road, Ballinderry and Kilwarlin, and Gracehill - the settlement church. At each we were greeted with love, friendship, food, and tea.

It was inspiring for us to be united in Christ through the Moravian Church. Br Paul and Sr Patsy Holdsworth were with us for every step of our journey and are the couple that pastor four Moravian congregations. We shared in a Lovefeast with the **Embrace** participants at Cliftonville, and helped lead a worship service at Portstewart.



On Friday night, as we cleaned up from the week and said our goodbyes, each of us was asked for our favourite moment. Luke Cox mentioned spending a week with his sister doing mission work before she left for college, and Tucker Cheek couldn't choose a specific moment because the week had been the best of his life. Several said they didn't want to leave! As leaders, we couldn't have been more proud. They were wonderful examples of who we are at Calvary church and great ambassadors. They remained dedicated to the mission, even as we were faced with

circumstances that could have altered our week. They made friendships that will continue to be part of life, and they were open and honest with us and the leadership team of **Embrace**. There are discussions that some of the participants and management team will make the journey over to North Carolina next summer to do some mission projects with us.

We are grateful for the different organisations and branches of the Moravian Church that helped make this trip a reality. We were financially supported by the Antioch Fund, Calvary Moravian, the Board of World Mission, The Mission Society, Reynolds

Corporation, and individuals that donated generously.

God bless you all and thank you for showing our team such wonderful hospitality, and for giving us a week we will never forget.

**Amanda Moody Schumpert**  
Director of Music and Christian Education  
Calvary Moravian Church  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina, U.S.A.

## Joy's Journal

Latest news from the Provincial  
Youth and Children's Office



September always seems a month for new beginnings with children and young people starting school, changing schools, going to university, beginning work or just moving up a class. I know for many the return to Junior Church or Sunday school, and the church clubs restarting it is a time to refresh what you do, and maybe try something new. I always seem to have so much information I could send out but it would be overwhelming. Reading and filtering the information I gather to make a comprehensive, readable and, I hope, useful Newsletter is a constant task, but September has so much, I sure it will be used through October too.

This year September has been a Safeguarding month. Following the publication of the new Safe Space (see the red folder in your vestry), I am urging all congregations to review and renew their Safeguarding policies. To help with this I am offering a training for church committee members (and anyone else interested); a training about the importance of having a policy and a guide to using it. So far I have been to Kingswood, Irish District and Ockbrook with others booked for next month. I am hoping that every church will have the opportunity to attend as it is useful to understand more about the policy and the



need for one. Safe Space is a guidance document and every church needs to adopt their own policy. If you don't have training booked yet, please get in touch.

I've attended a training, a conference and a meeting of the Christian Forum for Safeguarding (CFS). The training was from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) about the duty to refer, when to refer and what that actually means. Those attending were from a diverse range of settings; nurseries, after-school clubs, social services, churches, all keen to know what to do if they have someone on the staff who needs to be referred to the Barring Service. An interesting afternoon which helped cement some of the information I already knew.

The conference was billed as being about international safeguarding but was much more general than that. The theological input by the Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, was interesting as were the other speakers. This was a daylong conference and I took lots of notes which I need to read. Conferences are a place to meet new people and learn more, but I always need more time to think through the stuff in the talks and work out how it applies to the work we do.

Joy Raynor joy.raynor@btconnect.com 01763553549 or 07713853184

## New work in the north

In January 2013 members of the Irish District decided to create a project that would incorporate new work, renewal of faith, fellowship, and also something to fill that spiritual gap that occurs during the summer months when members take holidays not only from their work but also from Church.

The idea was to hold services at Northern Ireland's number one holiday resort, Portrush on the North Antrim Coast, about five miles from the Giants Causeway and 30 miles away from the nearest Moravian Church. Portrush is a town with two Blue Flag beaches, Northern Ireland's largest amusement park, six caravan parks and numerous holiday homes. At least eleven families in the Irish district own either a caravan or a property. Several of these families relocate the whole summer to this holiday town.

It was decided to seek funds from the current PEC initiative, and a small committee agreed a suggested budget which came to the sum of £2760. This application for this new work was approved by the PEC in March so planning commenced.

We hired a meeting room in the iconic listed building which is Portrush town hall. This circular room with large windows gave us views of the beaches, harbour, the hills of Donegal and the Big Dipper



in the amusement park.

We held five services with the three district Ministers and two lay preachers conducting these, using Mission Praise. Each of the preachers agreed a format for the service which was traditional but relaxed.

At each service there was an average of 35 people, which was amazing as a lot of Moravian Churches fall below this number during the summer. As well as members from all five congregations in the district, there were Moravians from

London and USA, people who had known of the Moravian Church from years gone by, people who had been members as children but now lived in the area, and unbelievably people who saw the advertisement and just walked in off the street.

The services finished with a cup of tea, biscuit and a good chat.

This has given the district a good template for looking at areas in Northern Ireland where new work could begin. We gained learning in areas of what advertisement works, what newspapers to advertise in, and also that this is something that could grow into a regular summer project, which in turn could drive enthusiasm for more new

work in other areas. It also maintained faith, developed fellowship and helped fill the spiritual holiday.

I mentioned the sum of money promised by the PEC and this is important. Having the knowledge that we were financially secure, we were able to step forward without any financial worries. The bonus then came in the hire of the venue, as due to the fact we were not there to make money, the Council hired the hall at £20 a night instead of £300. When you added in all the publicity materials the total spend was around £700, which meant that we did not need all the money offered by PEC. The district are now confident that this summer new work, a renewal project, is something that could go forward, funded by the district for about £250.

This venture was only made possible by the step forward in faith by the PEC to make funds available which allowed the district to have the confidence to try something new.

I finish my report with the following - imagine a walk through the Giants Causeway, large Fish and Chips, Moravian service and fellowship and finished off with a very large Ice cream - holidays just don't get any better.

**Mark Kernohan**

## Noticeboard Nov 2014

### New contact details

Br David Howarth  
27 Lynton Mead, Totteridge,  
London N20 8DG  
Tel: 0208 446 9853

Br Robert Hopcroft  
28 Oakdene Close, Pudsey,  
West Yorkshire LS28 9LW  
Tel: 01132 109076

Sr Jane Dixon (formerly Hutchings)  
email: jane.dixon@moravian.org.uk

Sr Rosemary Power  
Tel: 0161 370 7792

### NEW Moravian Car Sticker

The Men's Fellowship have produced, as part of the Fund Raising, a new MORAVIAN CAR STICKER @ £1 each.

If you can sell some in your congregation then please contact Rev. Kenneth Evans.

There is also a range of Lamb & Flag Jewellery, Badges etc. as well as the Men's Fellowship ties available for sale.



### Date for your Diaries and Church Calendars

**MORAVIAN MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DAY 2015**

FAIRFIELD MORAVIAN CHURCH, MANCHESTER

on SATURDAY **> 27th JUNE**





# A Visit to Flanders Fields in 2014

With another Eurostar trip behind me, I enjoyed an evening meal served at an open-air café on the almost medieval Market Square. The setting sun was gilding the cathedral tower and the belfry of the Cloth Hall beside it. As I watched people walking by, the sound of familiar music haunted the evening air. I said 'almost medieval', for nothing I could see around me was old. It was all reconstructed, for this square was in the town of Ypres. The familiar music drifting from the Mense Street was the Last Post sounding beneath the Menin Gate, the walls of which bear the names of 54,896 officers and men of the British and Commonwealth armies who have no known grave.

To visit the battlefields of World War 1 in this centenary year was both deeply moving and something of an emotional challenge. It has given new meaning to the many names with which I've grown up, like the Somme and Passendaele, turning them from learnt historical references to graphic memories of experience. The enormity of what happened in these places has become a reality for me, which instantly casts its shadow on the events of today

The tour included visits to so many sites, concentrated into two quite crowded days. The leader of the group began each day with a short exposition of what we would see; he brought informed scholarship and knowledgeable insight to bear, giving us just enough background to understand the context, followed by enough detail to colour what was then before us. It began with Beaumont Hamel, right at the centre of the network of trenches from which the soldiers emerged to attack the German lines on

01 July 1916. Craters and barbed wire still mark the lines. Below the Hawthorn Redoubt we saw the sunken lane from which 680 men rose to take a line of trees, which they didn't quite reach; eight men returned to shelter. The Ulster Tower, a replica of one from Clancloy, Co Down, marks the spot where nine men of the Irish Rangers won Victoria Crosses.

The great memorial arch at Thiepval can be seen from afar. It marks the site of a fortress held by German forces and which



Last Post - Menin Gate

it was imperative for Allied forces to capture - this took nearly three months to accomplish and the cost in lives was "terrible". Three hundred representative graves of British and French soldiers lie before it. On the stone panels of the monument are recorded the names of 72,104 men with no known grave; others who could be identified lie elsewhere. At the Vimy Ridge, the remains of miles of tunnels provide evidence of bitter engagement where the front lines were barely 60 feet apart. It was a focus for Canadian forces, and another monument records a further 11,285 men lost in the struggle, again with no known grave.

The second day showed many of the principal sites around Ypres, starting with the cemetery known as Essex Farm. Close to the front line, it was a casualty clearing station manned by, among others, Lt-Col John McCrae, a Canadian surgeon best remembered for his poem 'In Flanders Fields', written in May 1915. Some of the concrete bunkers in which the casualties were treated are still there. In the centre of the town of Poperinge, about eight miles behind the lines, Talbot House (Toc H) still stands, and we were able to visit the 'Upper Room', the attic Chapel where the Chaplain 'Tubby' Clayton offered worship to all who came to rest there, regardless of rank. A Bible lay open on the altar table, showing Psalms: I was encouraged to read from it, and the end of Psalm 121 seemed appropriate with the promise that 'The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in' - a truly poignant moment.

Tyne Cot cemetery was the focus for the afternoon, the largest of so many on the Flanders front with 11,953 marked graves; the walls of Portland stone record the names of a further 34,857 men with no known grave, together with another 1,167 New Zealanders. Nearby stands a memorial to some 2000 Canadian troops lost in a gas attack in 1915.

Huge losses were of course incurred on both sides, and the second day ended with a visit to a German cemetery at Langemark. We could not help drawing comparisons between the graves here and those in the Allied cemeteries with their immaculate lines of white headstones and manicured grass. Even those to the unknown fallen bear the inscription: 'A Soldier of The Great War

known unto God.' In this German site, grey stones lay flat on the ground marking the burial place of perhaps twenty men, and in the centre a large mound contains more than 22,000 bodies communally laid. Even the guide-book describes it as 'a dark and forbidding place'.

The final point of our two-day tour was to meet at the Menin Gate on the eastern flank of the town. This Gate is the official memorial to the missing men of the British and Commonwealth forces and was inaugurated on 24 July 1927. At eight o'clock that evening the Last Post was sounded and Scottish pipers played a lament. Men of the Fire Brigade, using silver bugles presented by the British Legion in 1935, have continued this tradition almost every night since, except for a brief period in the Second World War when Ypres once again fell into German hands. A fund was set up 'to ensure the sounding of the Last Post each evening for all time ...' Often wreathes are laid and the famous line of Binyon is quoted by members of the Royal British Legion. Siegfried Sassoon wrote: 'Who will remember, passing through this gate, the unheroic dead who fed the guns' Being present at this brief but deeply memorable ceremony marked a fitting and poignant end to the visit.

In all of this, the Moravian Church sought to maintain its stand on Christian principles. As the war dragged on inexorably, the links which the Moravians cherished with Germany came to be regarded as a handicap. It left what was described by G & M Stead in their book 'The Exotic Plant' (Epworth, 2003) as 'a legacy of unease' which affected the standing of many of our churches. The question remains as to where God was in all this. When thinking about history today, or even analysing current affairs, we rarely give God a place. Yet it is precisely what God can offer that will enable us to escape from what many regard as the inevitability of grinding human ambition.

As the centenary years unfold, more will be acknowledged of the incomprehensible struggle that the First World War demanded. The stark reality of its legacy and the mind-stunning statistics present an urgent narrative that must never be forgotten. Our leaders still want to take up arms so quickly, to face ill-defined questions in the vain search for political immortality. Have they learned nothing from history? The seventy-fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War in early September passed by with hardly a reference in the media.

When will they ever learn? Wann wird man je verstehen?

David Bunney

## War and aftermath: a local redemption

November is traditionally the month when we remember the dead. This year memories of the First World War in particular loom large. All those involved are now dead but many of us have some family memory.

Memories of the Second World War are closer to many of us. When I was growing up there were men we knew who were badly scarred by what they had seen, and suffered, and sometimes done to others. Some were innocent, like the local vicar who spent his German childhood in a concentration camp. Others were less so, including a cousin who turned his remorse into becoming a nurse to serve others at a time when men were rare in the profession. As in every war since, some responded to the past by silence, some by making the memories part of their social life with others who were there, some by breakdowns, others by taking to drink or domestic violence, and a few through the support of friends and family who managed by grace to respond in the best way at the right time.

It was not only those who fought who returned scarred. At school, we had a Frenchwoman as Head of Subject and a leading bully. This made her despised as well as feared, so, though her grasp of her subject was good, she was not a successful teacher. Then, in assembly to mark the anniversary of the end of the War, some of the teachers spoke of their experience. Mlle. stood up, in front of six hundred bored cynical teenagers and told her story.

She had been young and studying in England when the outbreak of War had stranded her. For five years she had witnessed at a distance the fall of France. She lost contact with her family. She heard with horror of the hunger, the repression, the murder of Jews, and of the danger to those who put their country above their safety. Then she had been approached by the secret services, and asked to work as an agent in France.

But she concluded, her face turned to

her hostile, riveted, audience, 'I was not the stuff of which heroes are made', and so she declined.

After the War she returned to France, for a time. Her family had suffered so much hardship, while she had been so far away and had escaped it. Now she no longer belonged. 'And so', she concluded, years of bitterness in her voice, 'I returned home, to England'.

She had thought she was a coward, and it had made her bitter, and angry with others, a person who took out her aggression on those who could not challenge her. Then she had the courage to admit what had made her life go sour. That day, among those who had protected themselves by rejecting her, something broke open, and we saw the real, gifted, person who knew her weakness. We found compassion for her. It was a moment of grace, that moment when we see things clearly, as they really are. It was part of the Easter story living today, showing us the cost of destroying ourselves and others, and how through Easter evil can be overcome. It said that we can all start again, and that those we have mistreated can be the ones who bring us God's kindness.

Most of us left school just afterwards so Mlle. may never have seen the effect of telling her story in public. But it was told in the right time and place. It was a small story in the context of War but it had changed the colour of her life, and perhaps changed it again in the telling. Perhaps for her and her listeners, though they might not meet again, healing had begun,

Martin Luther King said before his assassination:

**Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done ... It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier ... It is the lifting of a burden or the cancelling of debt.**

Rosemary Power

Versions were previously published in the Clare Champion and Swindon Advertiser





## Br. Carl Roberts tells of “The faith that drives me”

As a young boy I enjoyed music and singing. I always wanted to be a part of the Junior Choir of the Spring Gardens Moravian Church. The requirements to become a member were stringent - you had to read a passage of scripture unhaltingly; sing a hymn or song of your choice in key and without making any mistakes; all this in front of the Choir and the Choir Master; and be at least 10 years old.

For me this was easy, although I was aware of many of my friends who 'failed' on at least one occasion. I was so desirous of serving Jesus, that it was never my intention to stop there. I also wanted to become a pastor or minister. Of course there were many good role models: Bishop Maynard, Bishop Gubi and a certain Rev Winston J Messiah who spoke on Radio Barbados every Sunday around 12 noon. They preached the word of God without fear or favour. They were both liked and disliked because of their convictions.

Sometimes I was made fun of for this focus on my faith. It didn't bother me. Coupled with this was a love of music, but coming from a poor family that chance never properly materialised. I never became a minister even though I almost became a lay preacher for my church, conducting services and otherwise being active.

My career took me in a different direction but my Christian faith remained strong. Wherever I sojourned, either for vocation or training, I attached myself to a Christian congregation and became actively involved. Little did I know that while my faith increased and my yearning to understand the word of the Lord also increased, I was to be tested on more than one occasion?

I distinctly remember being in a vehicle which ran off the road as a young teenager and miraculously did not overturn. Years later another group of boys were not so fortunate and several of them died in a sad Mother's Day accident at the same spot.

There was another occasion when my faith was in full recall. As a first-time Chief Executive for Cable and Wireless, I was sent to Montserrat in July 1995. Shortly after my arrival, the volcano on the island began to erupt. There began one of the most frightening experiences in my life. With the ground constantly shaking under your feet, the sky blackened by volcanic ash and life in general under severe threat, my constant companion was my Saviour. I have been asked many times how did I manage. The Hymn (Mission Praise 22) has words which are quite fitting: 'All the way my Saviour leads me; what have I to ask beside. Can I doubt his tender mercies who through life has been my guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, hereby faith in Him to dwell! For I know what-e'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.'

I have also had issues with my health which have caused me

to lean on my faith, and there are many hymns which I enjoy singing on occasions. The first was as a small boy, when I stepped on a rusty nail. The wound appeared to be healing on the outside but was festering on the inside. One night I nearly died and had to be rushed to the hospital for an emergency operation. I had the first stage of tetanus poisoning. Fortunately the operation was a success. Another time my appendix nearly ruptured and this also resulted in another quick operation which postponed a training course I was to take at that time. Finally, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer and had to undergo an operation. Miraculously I never needed chemotherapy or radiation and to this day I have only suffered minor side effects of the operation.

I have always been a warm-hearted person sharing in the cares and problems of my friends, offering assistance to many others with whom I have come in contact. The hymn which I have cherished is MP 60 Verse 3: 'We share of mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear, and often for each other flows, the sympathising tear'.

I tell myself many times never to forget where I came from. I never should take myself too seriously or think too highly of myself. As Saint Paul wrote: 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' The hymn MP 201 Verse 1 keeps me humble: 'Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land; I am weak, but Thou art mighty; hold me with Thy powerful hand: Bread of heaven, feed me now and evermore.'

The Lord has come to my aid on many occasions; when I almost ran out of money when studying in the States or when I have been wronged. I recall MP 204 Verse 2: 'He comes with succour speedy to those who suffer wrong; to help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong; to give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light, whose souls, condemned and dying, were precious in His sight.'

I firmly believe that God prepares me for each of my roles in life. I have been able on many occasions to use skills which I gathered previously to the benefit of a current situation. I have come to realise that His hand is upon me and my family. He will never give me a challenge for which He has not already prepared me to deal with.

I have many other hymns which I love to sing. I end with this special hymn (MP 34 Verse 4) as I believe that every time we sing the praises of the Lord in Church or anywhere for that matter, we must offer of our best only. The Hymn says: 'In Thy house, great God, we offer of Thine own to Thee; and for Thine acceptance proffer, all unworthily, hearts and minds and hands and voices, in our choicest psalmody.'

**Dr Sir Carl B W Roberts KCN CMG**  
**Former High Commissioner Antigua and Barbuda**  
**Until recently of Hornsey Moravian Church**

## Goethe, Susanna von Klettenberg and the Moravians

In 1768 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Germany's greatest poet, returned to his family home in Frankfurt from university in Leipzig for convalescence. His mother, a devout woman, had gathered around herself a circle of friends of Pietist bent. Pietism, which had developed in Germany in the previous century, sought inner experience and devotional practice - 'a religion of the heart' - as a means of putting life into what was seen as the dry dogma and aridity of the Lutheranism of the time. (Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), the 'founder' of Pietism, was godfather to Zinzendorf.)

The most striking member of Frau Goethe's group was Susanna von Klettenberg. Goethe describes her as 'of slender form, of middle size and a hearty natural demeanour. Her very neat attire reminded me of the dress of the Herrnhut ladies. Her serenity and peace of mind never left her'. Susanna's childhood had been plagued by haemorrhaging (possibly tubercular) and she had developed an inwardness and sensitivity unusual for her age. She had a profound sense for what she described as the 'Invisible' and in particular a feeling of closeness to the 'Invisible Friend'. Intermittent illness and physical weakness remained with her throughout her life. The way she bore her suffering was an aspect of her character that deeply affected Goethe. 'She looked upon her sickness', he wrote 'as a necessary transient element of her earthly existence'.

Klettenberg's trust in and closeness to the 'Invisible Friend' fitted ill with her Pietism. Part of Pietism - with its stress on the emotional side of religion - was the need for a dramatic conversion experience. Klettenberg, given her closeness to her Invisible Friend, had the greatest difficulty in feeling reproach for anything she had done and could not conceive of a place of punishment or torment after death.

At the age of 30 she became acquainted with Count Karl Friedrich von Moser who had recently moved to Frankfurt.

The Count's parents had been closely connected with the Moravians and while Moser was not himself a member of the Church his views were much influenced by Moravian beliefs. Pietism encouraged personal confessions between its

adherents and Moser, who became a close confidant of Klettenberg, confided to her his own sins. It is unclear what these sins were - perhaps evil feelings towards others - but they caused her the deepest distress and led her to the view that she was herself no better. She suffered, she tells us, long agonies as she contemplated these sins and realised that all effort to avoid evil by moral behaviour would fail. Only faith could cure her. 'A force drew my soul to the cross. My soul drew near to him who became Man and died upon the cross... My joy became indescribable... I could soar aloft above that which formerly threatened me.' This surely approaches Zinzendorf's view that the believer should focus attention on Christ's sacrificial death rather than dwelling on his or her sins. 'The Pietist has his sin in the foreground and looks at the wounds of Jesus; the Moravian has the wounds in the forefront and looks from them upon the sin'.

Moser then presented Klettenberg with a copy of the Ebersdorf Moravian Hymn book. The minister at Klettenberg's church had a low opinion of the Moravians and under his influence she had considered Zinzendorf a heretic and a charlatan. This rapidly changed after reading his hymns. 'To my astonishment I found songs which pointed to what I felt. Had I been my own mistress I would certainly have forsaken fatherland and friends and gone to join him. I therefore became a Moravian sister in my own way'.

Goethe's friendship with Susanna von Klettenberg took place some 15 years after these events. Her simple Moravian faith affected him deeply. He was anything but a contented soul and she, realising this, assured him of his need for reconciliation with God. Goethe's reaction can be gathered from his comment: 'Now I had believed from my youth that I stood on very good terms with my God. I even fancied to myself that he stood in arrears to me.' But the sweetness of her character led him to take a closer look at the Moravians. In 1769 he travelled to Marienborn to attend a synod and the year after he met



Moravians in Strasburg. At the synod he claims to have been almost converted but he was less impressed with the Moravians he met at Strasburg, finding them 'rather dry'.

So why did Goethe not become a Moravian?

Joseph Hutton, in his entry on Moravians in the 1911 edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, mentions in passing Goethe's flirtation with the Moravian Church and states that he was put off by the their belief in the substitutionary doctrine of the atonement. Goethe himself has given another reason in his autobiography.

On the positive side he considered that the Moravians had acquired something of the charm of the Church in the Apostolic Age. He studied both its history and doctrine and was deeply impressed by the society they had created. The fact that the religious head was also entrusted with the guidance of worldly affairs gave the Moravians, he felt, an alluring peace and harmony. 'One little germ', he wrote, 'took root beneath the protection of a pious and eminent man and so expanded once more over the wide world.'

What he could not accept, and what separated him from the Moravians, was the doctrine of the utter depravity of man, in his own words that 'human nature had been so corrupted that not the least good could be found in it and so man must renounce all trust in his own power and look solely to grace and its operations for everything.' (This doctrine became one of the Essentials of the Moravian Church in the late eighteenth century and remained so until 1957 when the Ground of the Unity replaced the Essentials.) He preferred the view, found in Eastern Orthodoxy and in a more extreme form in the Pelagian heresy, 'that a certain germ of goodness remains in man which, animated by divine grace, is capable of growing into a joyous tree of spiritual happiness.'

Goethe acquired Susanna von Klettenberg's papers after her death in 1774 and wrote an account of her life from these. It is on this account and his autobiography that the above is based.

**Adrian Wilsdon**  
**Hornsey Congregation**



## Spotlight on Sparkhill United Church



The new home - the  
Methodist Church



Sparkhill Moravian Church  
in the snow

Sunday morning worship



This will be the last **Messenger** article from Sparkhill United Church! On 19 October we joined with our Methodist friends to become Hall Green United Community Church. This will be another milestone on the journey of our combined congregations.

For readers who do not know the history of Sparkhill United Church, we were formed by the coming together of the former Sparkhill United Reformed Church and the former Birmingham Moravian Church in 1975. There had been a Congregational Church in Sparkhill since 1902 and in 1972 the church had joined the United Reformed Church and became known as Sparkhill URC.

Running parallel at that time was the Birmingham Moravian Church. It was founded in 1968 to provide a place of worship for a growing number of Moravians from the Caribbean, and those who had been meeting together for many years.

The combined Fellowship was successful but in 2007 our premises had become impossible to maintain and, because it was a listed building, impossible to replace. So we moved 'up the road' and began to worship in the Hall Green

Methodist Church, firstly in the church hall and then as a joint congregation. Since then we have been moving happily towards becoming one church, determined to serve our local, mixed, community and to provide a place of work, worship and witness.

This has been a long journey and we must pay tribute to those who have worked tirelessly to get us to this position. Our joint Leadership/Elders' meetings have had to learn the complexities of Sharing Agreements, Charity Law and Constitutions as well as their normal duties. Our ministers over this period also had to adapt to different traditions, and we owe special thanks to Rev David Howarth and Rev Peter Bates who began the process; and our current ministers, Rev Colin McIlwaine and Rev Nick Jones who are leading us into the future.

We have no doubt that there will be continuing challenges for our new church but we approach the future with confidence that with God's help we will live up to our motto 'To worship God, to know Jesus, to serve all'.

**Blair Kessler**

### Congregational Register

#### Baptism

Belfast University Road  
William Andrew McCormick 15 June  
Kendell Louise James 22 June

#### Marriage

Dukinfield  
Lisa Webb and Matthew Rigney 28 June  
Dawn Todd and Vincent Littlehales 12 July  
Shirley Barnes and David Webb 30 August

Belfast, University Road  
Tanya Costley and Simon Macartney 02 August

#### Confirmation

Dukinfield Nigel Howard Clark 05 October  
William Evans 05 October  
Matthew Taylor 05 October

#### Received into Membership

Dukinfield Marie May Dale 05 October  
Dorothy Evans 05 October  
Fiona Jane Flint 05 October

#### Death

Belfast, University Road  
Elizabeth Gibson 16 May  
  
Royton  
Edith Ramsden 24 September  
  
Harlesden  
Wendell Burrell 06 September

## Congregation News

### Baildon

Our Christmas services were well attended especially Christingles as this, (although we are officially a 'town'), is a village event which many Baildoners think of as 'the beginning of Christmas'.

In the spring we had a Quiz with supper followed by all the wonderful Easter Celebrations, the highlight of which is the early morning service in our God's Acre. A beautiful morning this year and for me, the atmosphere felt very 'thin' between this life and the next.

Then came the task of redecorating the church which was followed by a massive spring clean and we re-opened with a Christening. The baby seemed very appreciative of our efforts and gurgled and chattered throughout.

We hosted the MWA Away Day along with help and support from Fulneck and Horton MWA Circles. The sun shone throughout so members were able to wander around our lovely grounds. Speakers talked about some of the 'projects' we had supported throughout the year, and we finished with Holy Communion. The MWA led the Pentecost Service and produced a birthday cake to share afterwards

In July our Toddler group, Beaver colony and Rainbow groups finished a busy fun-packed year with parties.

Essential repairs have been carried out to the church ceiling - replastering and repainting- followed by a necessary clean-up. The interior looks brighter.

Despite thunderstorms and torrential rain we 'stuck it out' at a children's fete, in a local park, and raised over £100. Many people wanted information on our weekly children's activities and we hope to see them when we restart in September.



In the summer we had Tea on the Terrace, and suddenly it was September and time for the Annual Scarecrow Festival. This year we took the theme from "le grande depart" and had Maurice Chevalier singing "Thank heaven for little girls" surrounded by eight of them and one little boy sitting on his Mummy's knee looking left out. Then it was time for Harvest and Church Anniversary.

Once a month there is a Farmer's Market in the village and we are open for hot and cold drinks and bacon or sausage butties. From a slow start this is becoming increasingly popular and is accompanied by on-going book and gift stalls. People come in to warm up or cool down and rest their legs!

Now we are thinking about our Christmas Fair and Christmas Services. Another year gone?! Busy busy busy? However we try not to lose sight of our main purpose... to provide spiritual refreshment and support for all those who come through our doors.

**Libby Mitchell**

### Swindon

### University Road

Our Mission service was a lovely day of worship & fellowship. We are grateful to Br Bob Hopcroft for leading the service on his visit to Africa. £300 was collected towards installing wells to provide clean water in Burundi.

In August we held our annual summer fete, a great opportunity to open the doors & welcome neighbours and friends into the Church.

During the summer months we have been welcoming visiting ministers & preachers and we are very grateful to everyone for their support.



University Road congregation has celebrated two baptisms, of William Andrew McCormick and Kendall Louise James. On 22 June, Children's Day, the Sunday School acted out the story of Mary and Martha, and Br Paul presented prizes.

Saturday 02 August might have brought rain but nothing would spoil Sr Tanya Costley and Simon Macartney's special day. The church was packed and there were refreshments afterwards. Later, many of the congregation put their dancing shoes on and joined the new Mr and Mrs Macartney at the hotel.

Wedding congratulations also to Karen Kinghan and her new husband Michael who were recently wed in Venice.

Br Mark Kernohan's 'Holiday Church' in Portrush was a great success.

In August, Br Paul welcomed a group from Calvary Moravian Church in North Carolina, USA.

A Vintage Fashion show took place 20 September. The models took on the personas of ladies from as far back as the 1860s and told us about their lives and fashion secrets. The evening finished with one of the models performing a (partial) striptease! The event was the first fundraiser for the maternity hospital in Kenya and we collected over £400. Thanks to Srs Margaret Smith and Marian Woods for their hard work in ensuring the event was a success.

The congregation outing took place on 21 September at Delamont Country Park. We met after the Sunday service for a picnic and a walk which was enjoyed by young and old alike. This was followed by ice cream and a ride on the miniature train, something Br Paul had been especially looking forward to. The afternoon concluded with a reading from the Watchwords and prayer.

**Helen McVeigh**

## Dates to remember

**9**  
Nov

Remembrance  
Sunday  
[www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk)

Realisation of  
the Headship  
of Christ 1741

**13**  
Nov

**16**  
Nov

International Day  
of Prayer for  
Persecuted  
Christians  
[www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)

World Day of  
Remembrance  
for Road  
Traffic Victims  
[www.roadpeace.org](http://www.roadpeace.org)

**16**  
Nov

Prisons  
Week

[www.prisonsworld.org](http://www.prisonsworld.org)

**16**  
Nov

**22**  
Nov

**30**  
Nov

Advent  
Sunday

**1**  
Dec

World Aids Day  
[www.worldaidsday.org](http://www.worldaidsday.org)

## From Church House

## November

04 Post Synod  
Review PEC

11/12th  
PEC, BMB and  
Estates property  
Meeting PEC

29 Consecration of  
Br Joachim Kreusel  
at 2.30pm at Hornsey

# Prayer Notes

**November 2nd** [Fourth before Advent] Matthew 24:1-14

Lord of Glory, who left your disciples with the promise that you will come again to take us to be with you for ever; open our eyes to the signs of the close of the age so that your return does not take us by surprise. Grant that we are not led astray; for false prophets have already come with their deception and love in many has, even now, grown cold. Though many fall away, help us to stand firm to the end that we might be ready to receive you and enter into your joy, when you come again to judge the world. Give us such a hope that our hearts long for that time when we shall see you in your glory. Amen

**November 9th** [Third before Advent] Matthew 25:1-13

King of the Ages, since know neither the day nor the hour of your coming, renew our strength so that we do not grow weary in our watchfulness and prayer. Let our lamps burn brightly in the days of darkness, and our hearts be strong in times of disappointment so that, patiently enduring the darkness of this world, we may be found shining like lights in the day of your appearing and may enter with joy into the marriage supper of the Lamb. Amen

**November 16th** [Second before Advent] Matthew 25:14-30

Everlasting Father, who has entrusted talents to us; each according to ability. Help us not to hide them away or bury them pointlessly in the ground but put them instead to good use, employing honestly and well whatever gifts you have lent to us. Grant that serving one Master and looking for one reward, the gain may be not ours only, but yours and your Kingdom's, and we hear at last that most joyful voice, 'well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord'. Amen

**November 23rd** [Sunday before Advent] Matthew 25:31-46

Son of Man, when you come in glory with all the angels with you and seated on your glorious throne, grant us to be placed at your right hand and to inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world. Give us such a love for you that we truly love our neighbour as ourselves; a love that leaps all boundaries and knows no distinction; that reaches out a saving hand even to the least of our brothers and sisters. Fill our lives with the single motive of service that all might be done in you and for you as we faithfully care for all to whom you send us; finally receiving your eternal reward. Amen

**November 30th** [Advent Sunday] Mark 13:24-37

Light of the world, who has warned us that the sun will be darkened, the moon not give its light and the powers in the heavens be shaken, before the return of the Son of Man; shine on us, for the night is far spent and the day is at hand when you are at the very gates. Awaken all who are careless about eternal things. Keep us from the deathly sleep which would hold us captive, so that we may no longer live as in a dream. Make us watchful in waiting for your coming so that when you stand at the door and knock, you may find us, not sleeping in carelessness and sin, but awake and rejoicing in your praises. Amen

*Richard Ingham*

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