



Kirchentag 2015

The 35th Evangelical-Protestant Kirchentag took place this year from 03 until 07 June in Stuttgart, capital city of the state of Baden-Württemberg in south-west Germany.

Visitors to this enthralling event enjoyed temperatures of 35 degrees - doubtless the Lord approved of what was happening there, as the first morning after was wet! The defining slogan this year was from Psalm 90:12 - 'damit wir klug werden' (that we may become wise), words displayed everywhere, not least on the bright-red scarves that everyone wore.

With over 2500 events packed into the five-day programme, no-one could share in everything! Quite obviously, homework is needed to define a personal schedule. I will remember particularly the challenge of the Bible Studies I was able to share: John Bell (from the Iona Community) won hearts by explaining that, although he was speaking in English, it was only his second language! He also led an act of Reformed worship in the Castle Chapel; consecrated in 1562, and situated off the courtyard of the Old Castle with its three tiers of stone arcades, it's one of the oldest places of



Photos: David Coleman

worship from the early days of the Reformation. I heard another led by Br Richard of the Taizé Community, and a third, given by no less a person than the State President himself, Winfried Kretschmann - not because of his rank but because he clearly knew his Bible!

The Kirchentag always attracts 'big' names as speakers. One regular participant is the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, herself the daughter of a Protestant Pastor. She took part in a debate about the opportunities and

responsibilities of the digital age. She acknowledged that Germany, so advanced in so many fields (the phrase *Vorsprung durch Technik* comes to mind) was not exactly in the forefront where digital progress was involved. She seemed well aware of the dangers of potential misuse of digital communications through oversight; this would need

to be monitored. She remembered Luther's words relating to the invention of printing: that every generation had to develop its own wisdom. The indoor-sports arena where this was held was also filled to its 10,000 capacity for another great speaker: Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the UN. Now aged 77, he shared the platform with Rt Rev Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds, and Frank-Walter Steinmeier who, while Kofi Annan was in office, had been the German Foreign Minister. Mr Annan urged the gathered throng to take responsibility for freeing the world of conflict, saying that no-one was too young for this, and never too old to do something about it. His quiet, patient arguments for everyone to work for peace was greeted with a long standing ovation.

Another event with political overtones was held in the parish church of Mohringen, a southern suburb of the city. Dr Margot Käßmann, one of the first women to be consecrated as bishop (she served the diocese of Hanover 1999-2010) had been Chair of the Council of

continued inside



Nepal update

(page 87)



Community in a changing world

(page 93)

the Evangelical Church in Germany until a motoring incident forced her to step down. Now a leading figure in the German peace movement, her fiery presentation on the Saturday evening attracted a huge following. Strangely, although she echoed the thoughts expressed earlier by Kofi Annan, this had not been included in the main programme (it was adjudged to have been 'too political'). It didn't prevent a large number of Kirchentagers from attending. She strongly articulated her displeasure at the way so many crises in the world were being mishandled: everyone, even migrants, deserved to be treated fairly.

The Friday evening is traditionally given over to Eucharistic worship in many different styles and languages. I was able to share in the Moravian one, held in a suburban parish church. The service was led by Bishop Theo Clemens, based not far away in Bad Boll. I was invited to share in the distribution with the church's German Pastor, with the Rev Elijah Spalbar Gergan from Ladakh in India and a Pastor from Tanzania. Taking part in the service were the members of the Efatha Choir from the Moravian Church in Dar es Salaam; I would describe their singing as 'different'! After the service we all shared together in refreshments of many kinds - a brief glimpse of the unity of Christians found in bread and wine.

The final - Sunday - morning of the Kirchentag brought an estimated 100,000 people to the closing Eucharistic service on the edge of the city by the river Neckar. There were 4000 instrumentalists in the brass band to lead the singing. How long does it take to serve so many with bread and wine? About ten minutes! The sermon was given by a young lady, a parish priest from Hildesheim, who urged us to remember the fellowship we'd shared, and to try to ensure that we used such memories to embrace all those in need in our troubled world.

Work has already started on planning the next one - in late May 2017. Centred in Berlin, there will also be events in many other cities associated with the life of Martin Luther - Wittenberg, Eisleben, Halle, Weimar, Leipzig and Magdeburg among them - in what will, of course, be the 500th anniversary year of the Reformation. It will be some event!

David Bunney



Latest news from the Provincial Youth and Children's Office

Joy's Journal

Summer camp is on the horizon again and by the time you read this may be over for another year. It will be my eighth camp and every year is different, every year is the best ever, every year has its challenges, and every year is exhausting. Every year has become easier - not easy - and less stressful, but not without stress; I've learnt to just let it happen, all the planning and preparation, my skills and those of the camp staff rise to meet every eventuality, whether it is a broken brace wire, upset tummies, terrible food, wasps, last-minute staff changes, or cancellation of the Irish flights two days before camp. I am sure that the success of camp isn't down to all the work we put in but to the base layer of prayer for camp and its participants that you all support us with before and during camp. Your contribution is it beyond value.



This month I attended the NSPCC conference: 'How safe are our children?' where their latest report on child protection in the UK was launched. This was a really good conference with a huge range of speakers over two days. The list of attendees was quite interesting and diverse from head teachers to social workers, from charity workers to web developers and every sector between. The report is available for everyone to read at <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/how-safe-are-our-children-2015>. It is an interesting reflection on what issues there around child protection and safeguarding. Going to conferences like this helps me have a better knowledge of what is happening in the wider world in regards to child protection, and not just the focused church world.

I managed to keep this journal going for a year, as requested, and I hope you have found it interesting and a bit of an insight to what my job involves and the variety of the tasks I do, some exciting, some dull, but overall I love my job and try to do it to the best of my ability.

The UN Convention on Children's Rights

Do you know the rights you have under the United Nations? Probably not all of them. How about the rights of children? A version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child written for children and young people can be found at http://crae.org.uk/media/76276/UNCRC_CYP_version.pdf.

The Convention has 54 articles that say what rights children have, and how the Government should protect those rights.

- Article 1** A child is a person aged 17 or under.
- Article 2** All the rights in this Convention belong to all children.
- Article 3** Children must always be a top priority.
- Article 4** Governments must do all they can to protect children's rights.
- Article 5** Parents can give children advice and help about their rights.
- Article 6** Every child has the right to be alive and to be the best person they can be.
- Article 7** Every child has the right to a name and nationality, and to be cared for by both parents.
- Article 8** Governments must protect the child's right to a name, a nationality and a family life.
- Article 9** Every child has the right to keep in regular contact with both parents so long as this is the best thing for the child.
- Article 10** Decisions about a child going to live in another country should be made quickly and fairly.
- Article 11** Governments must work together to stop children being taken illegally to another country.
- Article 12** Every child has the right to express his or her views, and those views must be taken seriously.
- Article 13** Every child has the right to express him or herself and to receive all kinds of information and ideas (this is called freedom of expression).
- Article 14** Every child has the right to

- have his or her own beliefs and religion.
- Article 15** Every child has the right to meet people and to be outside in a group (this is called freedom of association).
- Article 16** The law must protect every child's right to privacy.
- Article 17** Governments must make sure children get lots of different information about all sorts of things. They should protect children from harmful information.
- Article 18** Governments must support parents. Parents must always try to do what is best for children.
- Article 19** Every child must be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment.
- Article 20** Children who do not live with their parents have the right to extra protection.
- Article 21** The child must be the top priority in adoption.
- Article 22** Children who are refugees, or trying to be refugees, have the right to extra protection.
- Article 23** Disabled children have the right to a full life, and to be part of the community.
- Article 24** Every child has the right to the best possible health.
- Article 25** Children who are in care or who live away from home for health reasons should have their care checked regularly.
- Article 26** Governments must support every child's right to have enough money.
- Article 27** Children have the right to get everything they need to develop fully.
- Article 28** Every child has the right to education.
- Article 29** Education is about helping

- children to develop fully as people.
- Article 30** Children must never be stopped from enjoying their own culture, religion or language.
- Article 31** Every child has the right to rest, play and to do things they enjoy.
- Article 32** Children must be protected from harmful work.
- Article 33** Governments must do everything to protect children from illegal drugs.
- Article 34** Governments must protect children from being hurt sexually.
- Article 35** Governments must do everything to protect children from being taken away or sold.
- Article 36** Governments must protect children from all other harm.
- Article 37** Every child has the right to protection from torture and very bad treatment.
- Article 38** Children must be protected from wars and from joining the armed forces.
- Article 39** Governments must give good support to children who have been abused or hurt.
- Article 40** Children who are in trouble with the law have many extra rights, including the right to privacy, the right to a lawyer and, wherever possible, the right not to go to court or be sent to prison.
- Article 42** Governments must tell everyone about all the rights in this Convention.
- Articles 41 to 54** These articles say how children's rights should be checked, and how governments should promote, protect and respect all the rights in this Convention.

Nepal update From Br Nagendra Pradhan

We are all doing well by the grace of God. Among the two Moravian Churches here in Nepal, one at Khokana village got big cracks in the building. So we have decided to build a new place for worship. The work is half done now as you can see on the photos. We have not been able to conduct other fellowships which we used to have on weekdays. We still need Sunday school rooms for children and few rooms for the Day-Care centre where we have around 26

small children. About twelve families have lost their homes in the earthquake and they are living in the rice fields. The Lord gave us the opportunity to baptize four new believers at the church recently. We all need your prayer support. The house-fellowships have just started after two months. They are very thirsty for the fellowship.



Saturday worship



The temporary church on the rice field



Food time



Everyone helps



Ground breaking

The Law on Sunday

A lawyer writes

Last month Br Richard Ingham wrote about coveting in a modern society. Below, we consider one aspect of another Commandment, keeping the Sabbath in a modern society.

Sunday Service

One of the earliest acknowledgements in the law reports that Sunday is to be treated differently from other days comes from a case in Scotland in 1627. The court was asked to give effect to a document which had been signed on Sunday. The judges reluctantly agreed but said that it should not happen again:

'... The law is inclined to make a statute, to eschew the like in time to come, that no such acts should be done upon that day, the same being the Sabbath, wherein all acts should cease, which behoved to have a warrant from a judge, seing (sic) that day was appointed for divine service and for no other act ...'.

Until 1999 a writ could not be served (that is to say, the official document beginning court proceedings could not be formally delivered to the person to whom it was addressed) on Sunday except in very special circumstances. The rules provided that:

'...no process shall be served or executed ... on a Sunday except, in case of urgency, with the leave of the Court...'

The rules were completely revised that year. As a result such documents can be served on Sunday, but generally they take effect as if served the next day.

A bailiff, or enforcement officer, seizing goods because a debt due under a court order has not been paid, cannot do so on Sunday. National standards for enforcement officers recommend that enforcement should not take place on Bank Holidays, and that all religions and cultures be respected.

What about work?

Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides that:

'Everyone has the right to freedom of ... religion; this right includes freedom ... to manifest his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance...'

The Article goes on to say that the freedom can only be limited as far as 'necessary in a democratic society in the interest of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedom of others'.

A Mr Copsi relied on Article 9 in 2005 when his employers, WWB Devon Clays, wanted him to work a new shift pattern which would require him to work on Sundays. He had been offered alternative jobs by WWB, but it could not guarantee that he would never have to work on a Sunday. He refused the alternative offers and was dismissed. The Court decided that WWB had done all it could reasonably have been expected to do to accommodate Mr Copsi's religious beliefs. Mr Copsi lost his case.

Mrs Mba

More recently, in 2012, Mrs Mba, a Christian holding sabbatarian beliefs, was employed by the London Borough of Merton in a children's care home. Staff worked on a rota system seven days

a week. Mrs Mba's employment contract said she could be required to work on Sunday. Despite this she had been allowed to take every Sunday off for about 2 years. Her employer found this increasingly difficult. It required her to work on Sunday. She refused and brought a claim for religious discrimination.

She lost her case. The three judges in the Court of Appeal all agreed that she should lose, but differed in their precise reasoning. They were influenced by the fact that abstaining from work on Sunday was not in their view a 'core belief' held by a large number of Christians, and the employer persuaded them that there was no viable or practical alternative way of running the home effectively.

For an employer to insist on someone working on Sunday is always potentially discrimination.

Shops

Employees (but not people working through an agency) in shops have been given special protection since 1994 when the rules restricting shops opening on Sunday were very much relaxed. A shop worker, unless he has been employed only to work on Sunday, may give his employer formal notice opting out of Sunday work; the notice takes effect after three months. For these purposes, 'shop' means retail premises and includes hairdressers but does not include catering businesses. There is nothing an employer can lawfully do to prevent all of its shop workers opting out of Sunday working, except by employing people to work only on Sunday.

Large shops, which are defined under the Sunday Trading Act 1994 as those having an internal sales area of more than 280 square metres, are restricted in their Sunday opening hours. They may open for no more than 6 continuous hours between 10am and 6pm provided they give advance notice to the local authority.

There are specific exceptions in relation to Jewish shop owners who choose to close on Saturday.

Smaller shops are not covered by these restrictions and can open freely.

Discussion

I leave it to others to explain the prohibition on Sunday work in Christianity.

How far should the law force an employer to allow an individual to observe religious belief and practice? How far should an individual press his own views on others? How relevant is the impracticability of making alternative arrangements?

What is the work which one might object to perform? Paid work for the profit of someone else?

Mere catching up with tasks not completed earlier in the week?

What of a self-employed person working in his own business?

Paul Mitchell

Karl Barth and the Re-Appraisal of Zinzendorf

Livingstone Thompson Part 2

Introduction

In Part 1 of this series we begun looking at the contribution made by Karl Barth to our appreciation of Zinzendorf's theology. Barth's positive appraisal of the Count has, on one hand, helped to restore Moravian confidence in Zinzendorf as a theological mind that should be taken seriously today. On the other hand, though, because Barth relied on Zinzendorf largely to support his preferred way of speaking of Jesus, his assessment of the worth of Zinzendorf has helped to harden a view of Zinzendorf as a radical Christocentric theologian. This is like a double-edge sword which will make it difficult for us to see Zinzendorf differently from through the Christo-centric lens that Barth has placed over his writing. In this second part we will look at the theological weight behind Zinzendorf and the challenge we face when we try to read him in new and different ways.

Re-discovering Zinzendorf

Several writers within Moravian and ecumenical circles have noted Barth's reference to Zinzendorf as perhaps the only genuine Christocentric of the modern age and who must also be called the first genuine ecumenist. [Church Dogmatics IV, 1, 683] However, not as many people seem to be aware that Barth's understanding of justification, as distinct from sanctification was based in part on his reading of Zinzendorf. He lists Zinzendorf beside Martin Luther as being important influence on his thoughts. The distinction between justification and sanctification Barth claims, are based on 'legitimate considerations which can be traced back to the younger Luther, Zinzendorf and H. F. Kohlbrügge.' [Church Dogmatics IV, 2, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1962) p. 504] He expresses preference for Zinzendorf's theological ideas saying they were better than the rigid attempts at correctness that are found in philosophers like Kant and Ritschl and theologians like himself and Bultmann. [Church Dogmatics IV, 2, p. 799]

Barth also found significant theological material in the hymns of Zinzendorf. For example, he welcomed Zinzendorf's use of the expression 'Jesus Christ is *pro me*' Zinzendorf's I-hymns (hymns in the first person). Some people have criticized the subjectivism in Zinzendorf's hymns, saying it leads to an individualism in the Christian faith. Barth believes though that it should be acknowledged that the Christian faith 'is ... from first to last "I-faith", which can and should be sung in I-hymns.' [Church Dogmatics IV, 1, p. 757].

Saint Zinzendorf?

Barth loved the sense of urgency with which Zinzendorf applied

his Christian faith. He refers to Zinzendorf's comment on the Bible, 'it is so for me', as a way in which to understand how scripture speaks to us as individuals today. [Theology and Church: Shorter Writings 1920-1928, London: SCM Press, 1962, p. 297]. He refers to Zinzendorf as the 'greater counterpart of Pietism', whose role in world evangelization has not yet been equalled. Barth believes that Zinzendorf, along with Johann Sebastian Bach and others, should be regarded as Protestant saints, saying that Protestantism should not be ashamed to chant, under the heading of thanksgiving, 'a short litany of saints with the names of J. S. Bach, Zinzendorf, P. Gephardt, Terseegeen, Bodelschwingh, and Sudar Singh'. [Theology and Church, p. 331].

This weighty view about Zinzendorf places him in sort of theological straight-jacket, which makes it difficult to read him a different ways. For example, people doubt whether Zinzendorf can be of any relevance in helping us to respond to the challenges of religious diversity as we face it in the world today. What else but the condemnation of anything that is not Christian could be expect from him?

Human Faith vs saving Faith

Finding a way to resolve the conflicts between different religions is a formidable challenge we face today. For Moravians to respond to that challenge we need to dig deeply into our own religious tradition for helpful resources. Barth's weight notwithstanding, we must therefore look at Zinzendorf as a source to help us in developing an approach that is suitable for our own church. In the book, *A Protestant Theology of Religious Pluralism* (2009), I show that a fresh reading of Zinzendorf can yield helpful material to guide the Moravian community in its interreligious relationships. For example, we find in Zinzendorf an interesting distinction between saving faith and human faith. For Zinzendorf, every human being possesses human faith but saving faith is held only by the person who is oriented to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Other outstanding theologians in the modern period, for example, Rahner, Sobrino, also speak of human faith, indicating the inborn human orientation towards God. Appreciating that everyone human being has an orientation towards God is something that allows us to begin conversation with people of other religious faiths as well as with people who have no awareness of saving faith.

In the final part of the series we will look further at contemporary Zinzendorf research, which is helping to show the wider application of Zinzendorf's understanding of the Christian Gospel.

Moravians and Lapland

While not all early Moravian missionary journeys met with success, they may still be of interest both for their own sake and for the way in which they illustrate that distinguishing feature of the early Moravian Church: a constant sense of divine protection.

On 01 January 1734 three Moravians from Herrnhut were selected to preach the Gospel to the heathen peoples of northern Europe, the Laplanders and the Samoyeds. The Laplanders (frequently referred today to as 'Sami') are a nomadic, mainly reindeer-herding, people inhabiting 'Lapland', an area stretching from northern Norway across Sweden and Finland to the Kola Peninsula in Russia. Samoyeds refer to various native tribes, distantly related to the Laplanders, who live from hunting, fishing and reindeer-herding in an area stretching from Russian Lapland in the west to the northern tundras of Asiatic Russia. What the Moravians knew about the Laplanders is unclear but almost certainly very little. The Danish connection will have played a part in bringing Lapland into their consciousness as Norwegian Lapland was under the Danish Crown and Zinzendorf, whose cousin was the mother-in-law of the Danish king, had close relations with the Danish court. Quite what the Moravians knew of the Samoyeds is also unclear but probably very little beyond travellers' accounts.

Swedish Lapland was chosen as the first area of mission as it seemed to promise the greatest opportunities. The brethren were already aware of the activities of the Danish Lutheran Church in Norwegian Lapland and came to the view that a mission in Swedish Lapland would be less likely to involve friction with local clergy. As was the custom, the Lot was drawn and proved favourable.

The first leg of the journey took the brethren to Stockholm. Here attempts were made by the locals to dissuade them from their plan on the grounds that, as outsiders, they would be driven off either by the local clergy or by Lapp magic (a skill for which the Laplanders had long been noted). The first part of that advice at least made sense as under Swedish law (the Conventicle Edict of 1726) religious meetings not authorised by the Swedish Lutheran Church were disallowed. The purpose of this law was to halt the spread of Pietist movements (of which the Moravians were one) which challenged the monopoly of the national

Church and threatened the pure Lutheran doctrine which the Swedish Crown and Church vigorously upheld. At this stage the brethren must have become aware of an existing Church presence in Swedish Lapland; in fact the Swedish Lutheran Church had been ministering in Lapland since the sixteenth century.

The Brethren nonetheless decided to continue with their plan and in October 1734 crossed the Baltic to Oulu in Western Finland (Finland was then under the Swedish Crown). Oulu lies just south of Finnish Lapland and it is here that they took up a study of the Lapp language. In February of the following year they encountered their first Laplander who requested that one of the Brethren should accompany him on his return north. The Brother returned to Oulu after a month, unable to communicate in the difficult Lapp language. (Hottentot and Lapp appear to be the only languages that Moravian missionaries failed to master.) The position of the Brethren in Oulu became increasingly uncomfortable as relations with the local Lutheran church deteriorated. In spring they moved north to Tornio at the tip of the Gulf of Bothnia.

Their work with local churches again met the resistance of the clergy. This and the knowledge that the Lutheran church was already active among the Laplanders convinced them that they should abandon their journey. Despite the Lutheran presence, Laplanders held on to many heathen customs and beliefs and had the Moravians been allowed to continue with the mission they may well have achieved the success which went to another Pietist movement among the Laplanders, Laestadianism, a hundred years later.

In spring 1736 the Brethren returned to Stockholm and turned their attention to the Samoyeds. The Nenets are a Samoyed tribe living to the east of Lapland and it is probably to these that the Brethren now made their way. Via Königsberg (Kaliningrad) they travelled to Moscow where they wintered with the intention of joining a trading caravan north as soon as the weather permitted. In May 1737, while they waited for the roads to clear, a great fire broke out which engulfed the Kremlin and destroyed much of central Moscow, including the house in which the brethren were lodging. They barely escaped with their lives.

In early summer they set off from Moscow on the first leg of their journey, the 300 miles to Vologda. At that time rivers were the main means of transport in Russia and here they fell in with a Dutch merchant who offered to take them on his river boat

to Archangel on the White Sea coast on the condition that they took turns at the oars. This journey would have taken them along the Sukhona and Dvina rivers, a journey of some 700 miles. Passports were necessary for travel within Russia and at Archangel the authorities refused the brethren permission to continue on their journey north. Christmas 1737 brought a group of Samoyeds to Archangel, which encouraged the Brethren to make a further attempt to obtain the necessary papers. This second application was not well received and they found themselves cast into prison as spies. Their case was not helped by their passports, where they were described as tradesmen although admitting to being missionaries. From prison they were taken under armed guard to St Petersburg. On the journey south, as the party crossed a frozen lake, the ice broke. Two of the Brethren together with the two guards fell into the water and the third Brother pulled them out. The guards were so astonished that the Brother made no attempt to escape, that their previously severe attitude, we are told, changed completely. The Brethren's case was heard by a military court whose decision was expulsion from Russia with the further threat that should they return they would be burned alive, the punishment at the time for religious crimes. They returned broken-hearted to Herrnhut.

A second attempt to preach to the Laplanders was made the following year, 1739, when two other Brethren travelled once more to Tornio. From here they travelled north in the company of a Laplander and a herd of 500 reindeer. After a journey of 12 weeks they reached the Barents Sea where they procured a boat and sailed 230 miles west through treacherous and stormy waters among, it is said, whales which threatened to overturn their craft, before they eventually landed on an island off Norway (probably Magerøya). Here they lodged with the local magistrate. One of the Brethren was offered the job of school-master but both decided that their services in an area with schools and churches were not needed. After three years they returned to Tornio where they prepared the ground for later Moravian work among Swedish Lutherans; this time, it seems, meeting less resistance from the clergy.

Fortunately the story of the Moravian Church and Lapland does not end there and a later article will look at Moravian influence on Laestadianism, a branch of Lutheranism widespread among the Laplanders today.

Adrian Wilsdon

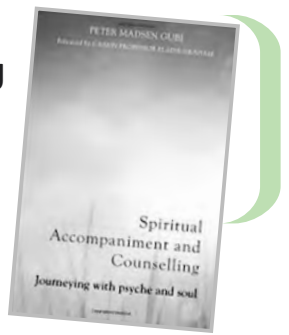
Book review

Spiritual Accompaniment and Counselling

Edited by Peter Madsen Gubi, London/Philadelphia:

Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2015. £16.99

ISBN 978-1-84905-480-5 eISBN 978-0-85700-861-9



In her foreword to this excellent book, Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester, observes that: 'It is times of physical illness, emotional distress, loss or other occasions of vulnerability that often lead us to confront profound questions of meaning and existence'. She suggests that the essays in the book represent a valuable source for Counsellors, Psychotherapists, Spiritual Directors and other skilled helpers to inhabit these spaces with integrity and discernment in the service of human flourishing and well-being.

The book offers a wide range of articles from various leading specialists, based on their practical experience. Sister Elizabeth Obbard feels that those individuals who, while primarily devoted to some form of spiritual ministry, can benefit from understanding and exercising, when appropriate, the skills of a counsellor. Peter Gubi in his introduction observes that pastoral care, like Spiritual Accompaniment and Counselling, needs to be 'flexible, variegated and able to respond at different levels of existence, according to human need'. In his chapter on Forgiveness, he takes the bold step of questioning himself as to whether it is right for a Christian counsellor to navigate his/her client/accompanee towards forgiveness. It is a difficult question, and Peter, as a therapist and a Christian, would wish to promote forgiveness, but he points out that it is not possible in all cases, especially where sickening experiences are involved. Ruth Bridges, in her article on the spirituality of pain and suffering, states that pain puts us acutely in touch with ourselves. It is an inevitable aspect of being human. She quotes N. J. Koller: 'traditions and spiritualities come from a time when there were few choices

around pain...and that we could do nothing about the pain we experienced except pray'. We have more choices, and therefore more expectations, around pain today. And we now have access to many remedies that offer an easing of physical pain. But the pain of soul and spirit still holds elusiveness and a complexity that may be acutely frustrating. Jane Williams, Associate Professor in Clinical Pastoral Counselling at Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, PA, comments that: 'This warmly accessible resource affirms that with deep reverence for the mystery of the human journey, and for the Presence greater than ourselves who journeys with us, both Spiritual Accompaniment and Counselling can instruct and inform each other to the benefit of clients'.

My feelings are that this book will be a wonderful resource for all who are devoted to a measure of pastoral care, and should form part of the training for ordained Christian ministry. It is practical, readable and instructive. On a personal note, I witnessed a major crisis in Peter's own life when, as a student Minister, he agonised over his future in ordained ministry, and the PEC finally accepted Peter's offer for non-stipendiary service. The research manifest in this book, and his recent appointment as Professor of Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment at Chester University, will tell you that it was the right decision. And Peter combines all this with a caring ordained ministry to the Dukinfield congregation, and to the Moravian Church.

Graham Mallinson

A Canticle of Thanksgiving

- 1 Love . ever- / lasting / love
is God's / precious / gift to / all:
As we thank You, our God, may your / love . fill our / life;
Ever- / lasting / love . love of / God.
- 2 Peace . for our / healing, / peace;
faith's re- / ward and / gift of / God:
As we thank You, our God, may your / peace dwell / in us;
calm,, en- / folding / peace . peace of / God.
- 3 Grace . such a- / mazing / grace;
wondrous / gift of / God to / all:
As we thank You, our God, may your / grace shine / in us,
daily re- / newed by / You . gracious / God.
- 4 Joy . overflowing / joy,
gift that / lifts the / soul to / God:
As we thank You, our God, may your / joy . fill our / hearts;
over- / flowing / joy . joy in / God.
- 5 Praise . never- / ending / praise
for these / precious / gifts of / God:
As we thank You, our God, may our voices / ever / rise
inn songs of / love . To our / glorious / God.

*Chanting suggestions: TA Walmisley in F (ch.22, MHB)
Words: Paul Gubi, 2012 Walford Davies in C (ch.42, MHB)*

Catching the Spar Fulneck Heritage Day

**Saturday
12 Sept
10am to 4pm**

The story of Jan Hus,
the forerunner of the
Moravian Church

Events unfold revealing the intriguing 600-year-old connection between the Bohemian reformer Jan Hus and the historic settlement of Fulneck

- Watch the exciting dramatization of the trial of Jan Hus in 1415
- Explore the grounds following the settlement trail and other children's activities
- Experience the wonderful scenery on the guided tour
- Enjoy music played on the historic organ
- Enquire in the fascinating museum
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**Free
Entrance**

Creation

Br Ingham's reflections on creation in the June 2015 Moravian Messenger misunderstand both the way in which the Bible was written and the way in which science functions. Did God literally dictate the original Bible or did he guide someone who felt they were prayerfully following God's inspiration? God continues to inspire people today and as a scientist I feel that it is his calling to help reveal the wonders of his world and creation. But this does not necessarily mean I will always come up with the right answers.

Science divides into two types, theoretical and experimental, and it is a competitive sport between devising experiments to disprove a theory and devising new theories to explain the discordant results. When both sides are satisfied the theory is accepted and although we may say 'proved' this not in the literal way that a mathematical theorem can be proved. Later, a more general, or all-embracing theory or new experimental data will almost certainly come along which forces revision. But generally the old theory remains valid within the limitations that were tested. For example Newton's theories of motion and gravitation were accepted for many years until Einstein started thinking about the implications of travelling on a light beam, namely, that time would then stand still! Since then an extremely accurate atomic clock has been flown round the earth on a jet plane and found to lose a small fraction of a second compared with a stationary clock in accord with Einstein's 'special relativity' and, even more recently, light has been found to bend around massive objects in accord with his 'general relativity'. Nevertheless Newton's equations remain accurate enough for everyday purposes and indeed for most space programmes, whilst Einstein's light bending is currently being used in search of the mysterious 'dark matter' and 'dark energy' yet to be understood.

Even Einstein had problems in understanding quantum physics and of course I share these difficulties. Nevertheless, we cannot, even in biology, escape its implications. The sensitivity of processes such as photosynthesis, magnetic navigation by birds, and our sense of smell, are all impossible to explain by classical physics but can be solved using quantum physics.

An old theory which proved plain wrong was 'phlogiston' as an element of combustion, and a more recent theory

which, although elegant and plausible, had to be discarded in favour of the 'big bang' was that of 'continuous creation'. Interestingly, one of its proponents, Thomas Gold, had in 1947 proposed an ingenious, but biologically improbable, theory for the way our hearing is sharpened up. This remained just a theory until 1978 when David Kemp discovered sounds coming out of the ear. I was sceptical (this was my field of research) and embarked on a long series of experiments which, to my surprise, all supported Gold and Kemp.

When it comes to evolution we don't have just a theory but a truly massive amount of experimental data supporting it! God was intelligent enough to devise a system which would run itself according to his rules, and he does not need to keep interfering to update it or keep it going. Evolution takes place by means of a large number of extremely small steps. Each step is triggered by a mutation in a gene in the DNA caused by radiation or other malfunction which is usually damaging in its effects and so fails to reproduce or dies out within a few generations. Occasionally, however, the mutation is favourable and gives that individual an advantage over its contemporaries which eventually results in its progeny becoming dominant, it is a very slow process as demonstrated by the fossil records. Some changes can be quicker: a species of moth inhabiting urban areas became darker during the heavy industrial era to increase its camouflage and is now turning lighter again.

The eye is an excellent example of evolution in which changes occur concurrently. As Br Ingham implies, what use would a good lens be without sufficient light cells to make use of it? In fact both features (as well as others such as brain networks) evolve concurrently so that all remain roughly matched. Vision is such a useful attribute that it has evolved independently several times in different creatures. Even the crudest possible light detection confers a tremendous advantage over none at all. Evolution is a case of 'horses for courses', each species evolving so that it is adapted to its specific niche in the environment. Although we tend to assume that humans are the pinnacle of evolution birds have better eyesight, bats have better hearing, many animals are stronger, and we in turn depend on many micro-organisms for our own existence. Each is 'fit for purpose' and made by

God.

One need lose no sleep over the 'missing' link. The 3.2M year old 'Lucy' was found in 1974 and 4.4M year 'Ardi' in 1992 both in Ethiopia, and more recently even older finds in Kenya. We are not descended from monkeys but we do share the same ancestors with them, a fact which is confirmed by our almost identical DNA, the ancestry in fact, going back through fish. Whilst it is very satisfying to fit the last piece in a jigsaw puzzle, the picture becomes clear long before this point. In any case, even if one link were missing there are so many other strands in parallel that the edifice of evolution is secure.

Returning to creation, what use would it have been for God to say to his amanuensis: 'Don't forget about DNA!', when neither he nor his readers would have understood. God reveals to each generation according to their understanding. I am even receptive to the idea that the Biblical creation story might never have been intended to be taken literally but is an attempt to convey the majesty and power of God, but not being my field, I would defer to Biblical scholarship on that issue. As a scientific theory, of course, it fails at virtually every stage.

To sum up, God created the 'big bang' (and someday we may understand how), followed by 'inflation', expansion of the universe, condensation and coalescence of matter into clouds, contracting further to produce galaxies and stars where heat, pressure and radioactivity produce atoms of larger mass, some of this material being ejected to form planets. As these cool, chemical combinations occur, eventually producing organic chemicals and elementary life, which by processes of mutation and survival of the fittest, humans and thousands of other creatures and plants have evolved. Then about 400 years ago a man came along and wrote the complete works of Shakespeare. If this is Br Ingham's 'explosion in a print works' I find it both plausible and truly wonderful, much more so than the creation story of Genesis.

The scientific view of God's creation also avoids the problem of understanding why God does not intervene in natural disasters. His power is revealed in the way he inspires others to help, comfort and support the injured and the bereaved.

Pat Wilson

The author has a background in research physics, in particular in the field of hearing.



Community in a changing world



One of the intriguing aspects of late-twentieth-century Christianity in north-west Europe has been the growth of ecumenical Christian community. Some communities have grown in response to a perceived need to offer Christian witness through community, and to gain the support and challenge of like-minded people. As a Member of one of them, I have found it a particular way of life, to which some people are called, even when they live dispersed.

The Iona Community was founded in 1938 by a Church of Scotland minister, George MacLeod, a minister in some of Glasgow's most impoverished areas, and an outspoken advocate for social justice, a former soldier turned pacifist. To him, the Community was for young Church of Scotland ministers and students, and he set them to work under unemployed tradesmen rebuilding the ruined abbey buildings on the Hebridean Island of Iona, so that it could become a ministers' training college.

The island pattern included manual work but also debating pressing social issues. Visitors began to attend these 'conferences' and discussions, and like many before and since found that the island experience was life-changing. Iona has been a place of prayer for fifteen centuries and something there seems to speak to people in a special way, making conversation possible.

Seventy-three years later, staff run the rebuilt abbey and another residential centre, where similar weeks intended to provoke thought and debate continue. A recent fortnight spent there found retired Dutch people, Americans and a group of young Swedish students and professionals present, while people arriving alone and joining in the week's community came from many parts.

There is also a youth adventure centre on the Isle of Mull, originally set up for public schoolboys and Borstal inmates, and now used mainly by inner-city groups. Dedicated youth work in Glasgow over the years brought many groups to what is a very different experience of life.

The Iona Community Members are dispersed. They are Christians with a commitment to social justice and a willingness to live by a common rule and to meet as regularly possible for prayer and sharing our stories and challenges.

Some Members have some form of church ministry, mainly in deprived areas, or in new forms of church life. Others are voluntary sector workers, medics, academics, social workers, trades unionists, businesspeople and writers. The older trades like coalmining are still represented - just. Probably the best-known Member is the hymn-writer and speaker John Bell. In May, a seventy-year-old Member narrowly missed being elected to Parliament for the first time. But most are not well-known outside their local communities - which are at the core of the commitment.

Our Rule of Life, to which we re-commit each year, requires daily

prayer and Bible reading. We also pray daily on a rota for each Member.

We account to each other in local 'Family' groups, defined by where we live, not necessarily by who are friends are! We discuss our finances, what we tithe and where, and what is more difficult, how we spend the other ninety per cent. Even if this just concerns shopping, holidays or the mortgage, it shows what we think is essential. Originally intended to make sure that no one suffered hardship, this is now a way to acknowledge, in a society private about income, what we have, what we value, and how we use our consumer power.

We account for the use of our time. This was instigated in the early years, allegedly because the tradesmen did not believe the ministers could do a full day's work. Nowadays the temptation of those with jobs to overwork is strong, and this rule provides a useful check.

We also calculate the amount of carbon our lifestyle has cost the planet each year and seek ways to reduce the effect.

The best-known part of the Rule is that we act for justice and peace, usually in our locality. Some do so in extraordinary ways. One, now aged 80, takes destitute refugees into her home, provides them with a key, a bedroom and a hot meal each day. Others in her 'Family group' help out with the cost of fares for essential meetings, shoes and so on. Several members have been Ecumenical Accompaniers for Peace in Palestine-Israel. A recently-qualified doctor spent a year in a clinic in rural Uganda. Another is exploring alternative economies on a Hebridean croft: they have just started growing tea! Others campaign publicly against poverty and inequality. Several keep up the prayerful protests against nuclear weapons at Faslane naval base in western Scotland, and some have been arrested as the price of non-violent action based on conscience. Radical social commitment is by no means confined to full members - one island volunteer returned to his native Kenya and has set up a sacred earth project, aimed at justice in land use.

A description of a Community focuses on the ideal, and we frequently fall short. Our commitment to each other and the Gospel may not always be as strong as we believe. It may be that our work needs to change direction radically. There are constant challenges in running the island centres. But there seems to be the grace present to draw us back when we go off-course, calling to a challenging Christianity that draws us to grow in the Spirit, and to seek to influence our world.

At a time of upheaval in church life, becoming a member of an 'intentional Community' can be a life-affirming choice, though it is only one way of living out the Gospel. Community life in this dispersed form is not an alternative to local church, but something that anchors, and allows us companions on this specific part of the Christian journey.

Rosemary Power

Published previously in the Methodist Newsletter. The current programme for the centres on Iona (the Abbey and MacLeod Centre) can be found on the website. www.iona.org.uk.

Congregation News

Leominster

On the day of Harley Owens' funeral, a bud appeared on the amaryllis plant that he had inspired me to grow many years ago by giving me the bulbs. It had never bloomed before, but thanks to his wife Joy, who advised me to chop it back and leave it to lie dormant, there it was, out of season but timely, especially as it was also at Easter time. The four blooms that resulted were indeed beautiful.



With Joy and his family, as a church,

we mourn his passing. Until he became too ill, he was always there on a Sunday and told us many stories about his past in his modest way. He was in the RAF and served in Egypt and Jordan, where his regiment guarded King Hussein many times. He took part in our Remembrance Sunday service every year although he was so ill last November.

He also was a fund of knowledge about the history of Leominster because he worked here as a driver, engineer and builder after his RAF service. He helped build the old cider factory which is now Aldi's, the Minster School and Wigmore High School. He also worked at Cadbury's for a while, ending his career

working for Leominster Council.

A keen gardener, he also loved tinkering in his shed. In their living room is an array of silver cups which he won as a darts player. He played for many teams and took part in a national competition, The News of the World Cup, where he reached the finals.

He and Joy celebrated their Golden Wedding in 2012. We and his family rejoiced with them. He was the head of a loving extended family. Daughters Judy and Tracie gave him five grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He was proud of them all and they continue to support Joy.

Dilys Howard

Kilwarlin

We have had another busy year at Kilwarlin. As usual we had a Ulster fry breakfast after our Easter morning service, catering for over forty members from the church and district. The week before, we had another successful Orange service accompanied by Bailey's Mill accordion band. On the first of June the young people led our Sunday school prize-giving service they were all presented with a personalised Moravian hoodie.

The annual garden party once again was very well attended and this year we were treated to accompaniment from Ardarragh Accordion Band. Thankfully we had a sunny day and church and district members and local community were once again very generous. A number of our members attended the Portrush summer services

which were exciting new outreach work. On 06 August we had a church tour followed by a barbeque for a group of young American Moravians from North Carolina as well as members of Embrace Ballysillan. On 24 August we had a cradle roll service followed by a soup lunch which was well attended. We plan to have a second, inviting people baptised before 1970.

Rev Paul Holdsworth led the anniversary service with a memorable extremely wobbly jelly as a visual aid. At Harvest we had Rev Steve Mc Whirter in the morning and Rev Tim Close in the evening. The church looked and smelt amazing. On 16 November on Church Service Sunday we presented Sr Hazel Law with a painting of the Church, a cheque from the congregation and a celebratory cake, to mark her retirement

after serving as treasurer for over twenty years.

On 07 December there was a very special service when we made Billy and Ann Hare and Cathy Law members of the church.

Eight young people attended the youth weekend in Cultra and six children attended the pantomime at the Lyric Theatre. The young people led an excellent Christingle service, which followed the baptism of Charlie Law. Another highlight was on 29 March when Stuart and Adam Law were confirmed and Camilla Law became a church member. We may be a small congregation but it is wonderful to see it grow.

Sr Eunice Hoey

Ockbrook

We were lucky to have good weather for our garden party - sunny, warm, slight breeze but no rain. The crowds came out to enjoy the day in beautiful surroundings. It was opened by our good friend Rhoda from the Anglican church who encouraged us to spend our money on the many stalls, where books, ice creams, hot dogs, refreshments and much more was available. There was a cake competition, a fancy dress competition, coconut shies, plenty to sit and watch and gossip with friends, with pleasant background music. We made more than last year too! There were guided tours round the settlement which are always

popular.

We were saddened by the sudden death of Stewart Horrobin. The church was full for his funeral service, and we were invited to join his family for lunch in the Lecture Hall afterwards, where we learned just how much he had done for our church in his unassuming way. We will certainly miss him.

We took part in Christian Aid collections and the Hunger Lunch and continue to show groups round the church and Settlement where they enjoy seeing the amazing garments made by the Single Sisters long ago when there was no electricity. They love to hear of the

history of our church from Alan McGibbon while enjoying tea and cakes.

We must organise events to raise funds to pay for repairs on the manse which include total rewiring and are asking for donations and interest-free loans. We look forward to the coming of our new minister, Br Joachim Kreuzel (Bishop), and are grateful to retired ministers and members who have taken services in the interregnum.

We are now making plans for Heritage Day which will focus on the history of the Lecture Hall and its uses in the past.

Marie Rose

Bedford

The Quarry Theatre at St Luke's, set in the former St Luke's URC/Moravian church in Bedford, was officially opened on June 26th by HM Lord Lieutenant for Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis before invited guests. The conversion to a theatre, costing more than £6m, has

been achieved with great sensitivity, and much evidence of the building's history as a church is still evident. Among the guests were two former ministers of St Luke's, the Revs Fred Linyard and David Bunney, who were treated to a performance of a new

interpretation of Shakespeare's Henry V by Jules Crossley, Bedford School's Director of Theatre. In her opening speech, the Lord Lieutenant spoke of her hopes that the building in its new guise would continue to be accessible to everyone.

David Bunney

Ballinderry

Members of the Church Committee were able to join a large gathering at Lisburn Civic Centre when Sr Patsy Holdsworth was given the unique honour of a civic reception. Many representatives came to pay tribute to her work, not only for the congregation at Ballinderry but in Lisburn City and the greater Belfast area. The Deputy Mayor and members of organisations presented her with gifts to thank her for the outstanding contribution she has made to us all during her stay in the Irish Province. Sr Holdsworth's final service was held in a packed church with many visitors present, including the new Mayor of Lisburn and his wife and we all later enjoyed a truly stupendous cake!

The congregation presented Patsy, who had come to us as a student, with a specially hand-bound book and other gifts, including many from the children of the congregation. It was a sad time

for us, but all present wish Patsy and her husband Paul every blessing for the future. We have truly appreciated the love and care Patsy gave, not only to the congregation, but to the many other organisations, who benefited from her drive and commitment. As we continue our work all the congregation is helping and we enjoyed a very successful sponsored walk and a car-boot sale organised by the M.W.A. which raised over £600

The major project of trimming and maintaining the trees around the garden and God's Acre is now complete. The repair of windows in the church has now been finished and all the church and Manse windows are being repainted as part of our on-going repair programme. The M.W.A. have very kindly provided the funds for a new modern-style noticeboard which is more visible to pedestrians and traffic. We continue our work in helping the materially

disadvantaged in society in conjunction with other churches in Lisburn, and provide food and clothing as part of a Christian effort group. At the end of term we will as usual be presenting each child leaving the village Primary School with a Bible and this tradition is appreciated by both children and parents. We have enjoyed the last few months as more of our local community have joined in the events with the church, and we have helped the local youth club which is very important in a small rural area. Sr Violet Best is producing our monthly newsletter and her lively mix of fact and message is appreciated, as are the services of all the lay preachers. The Sunday School children sang songs and presented readings on Children's Day and although small in number they performed very creditably.

Marilyn Marshall

Baildon

What a difference a Day makes

About 2 years ago the ladies of the Baildon Congregation were invited by the Guide Leader to visit the guides one evening and try to teach the girls to knit.

I had not picked up a pair of knitting needles for nearly forty years and I was not alone. So a little practice was called for. Could we still knit? Can you remember how to cast on? Can we purl? The day arrived with limited success on both sides, yet a pleasant evening was spent with our Guide Company. However more importantly it triggered a dormant talent.

We have grown in confidence. We started by knitting a few hats, scarves and gloves. We then ventured into toys. Hedgehogs were our next venture, the



tinsel-sparkly variety. They became popular and we raised about £150 from these alone. By Christmas 2014 we did not wish to see another hedgehog. We also formed a small craft group which meets weekly in the church hall. We had a stall for this group at the last Moravian Market, which again was very successful.

The Name the Doll, which was dressed by our oldest member, raised £25.

Our latest venture (the brainchild of one of the group) was the Nativity Scene. There were many un-Moravian words uttered over this. Sr Gloria David was presented with it as she left Baildon to begin her much-awaited retirement. She seemed very pleased with our efforts.

If we had not accepted the invitation from the Guides this would never have happened.

We are now knitting (toys mainly) to raise funds for our Brothers and Sisters in Nepal. Orders can be taken: please contact Liz Simpson. liz.simpson51@btinternet.com

Wendy Huggan

Fairfield

Sunshine

On 18 April members and friends were invited to the college to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of Br Alf Stonehewer. The sun was shining and Alf was in fine spirits, and his family provided a lovely buffet tea and musical entertainment. What a lovely way to celebrate the birthday of a gentleman who has been such an important part of church life for many members and friends over a long period of service as our church organist. Many of us have been privileged to have him play at our family weddings, christenings and funerals. (I believe he still goes in church during the week to keep his hand in).

And Showers

Regrettably the good weather did not extend to all our activities this spring; on 03 May approximately 50 sisters celebrated their festival with tea in the college. This year our guest speaker was Sr Janet Cooper who spoke to us about the aims and ideas of the Moravian Women's Association. It is nice to get the opportunity to get to know Janet a little better as she and Phil will be moving into the manse. We then had the congregation Whit Walk on 24 May, when about 30 members processed behind the band in our local area.

And worse!

The worst of the weather came when 26 runners and walkers took part in the '5K Race for Life' at Woodbank Park in

Stockport on 31 May. The Fairfield team of 25 ladies and Patrick braved the awful weather to complete the race and raise funds for Cancer Research- special thanks to Sr Anne Wood for organising and motivating the team.

We try hard to ensure that our fundraising is not all about Fairfield, even though with such old buildings maintenance is expensive. In recent months we have had a Jumble sale, a table top sale and a Swop shop for church funds. However we also have after church coffee each month and raise funds for worthy causes such as the North West Air Ambulance and The Believe and Achieve Trust to support those affected locally by meningitis.

Margery Sutcliffe

Dates to remember

13
Aug

Manifestation of
the Holy Spirit's
powers 1727

First missionaries
set off 1732

21
Aug

Noticeboard

Br James Woolford will be Ordained as a Deacon at Wellhouse Moravian Church at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday, 10 October. Br McOwat will be the officiating Bishop. Please keep Br Woolford in your prayers as he prepares for this, the next chapter in his service of our Lord.

Sr Jackie Morton writes: Anyone wishing to receive the World Mission Committee's occasional e-newsletter is asked to send a request to wmc@moravian.org.uk and will then be put on the circulation list.

Br Peter Gubi, Minister of Dukinfield, has been awarded a personal Chair and has been appointed Professor of Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment at the University of Chester (the first in the UK). In 2016, he will also be a Visiting Scholar at Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Congregational Register

Baptisms

Fairfield

Oliver Alexander Garry Davidson
24 May

Louis Evan Hall 31 May

Communicants

Ballinderry

Courtney Conroy 29 March

Deaths

Fairfield

William Johnson 17 May

Jean Bradley 24 May

Prayer Notes

Richard Ingham

Sunday 2nd August [Trinity 9] John 6:24-35

Son of Man, who has promised that whoever comes to you shall never hunger and whoever believes in you shall never thirst; we confess that we have worked in vain for the food which perishes. We have tried in our own strength to do the works of God and yet the true work of God is to believe in you, whom he has sent. Feed our souls with spiritual food; with the bread of life from heaven. Grant that we may truly partake of you by faith; that by your grace, through Word and Sacrament, our souls might be fed and finding refreshment of spirit we might be strengthened for your service. Amen

Sunday 9th August [Trinity 10] John 6:35, 41-51

Son of Joseph, who came to your own people who neither recognised nor welcomed you, but instead despised and rejected the Lord of glory. Forgive us when our hearts have been far from you; when we have hoped for things eternal, but turned away from the Holy One of God. Draw us near to you, the living bread that came down from heaven, that the times to come may not be as the past. Grant us never to grumble at your truth but humbly come to you that we might listen, learn and believe and so know the way that leads to eternal life. Amen

Sunday 16th August [Trinity 11] John 6:51-58

Lord, this is your feast, prepared by your longing, spread at your command, attended at your invitation, blessed by your own Word, distributed by your own hand, the undying memorial of your sacrifice on the Cross, the full gift of your everlasting love, and its perpetuation till life shall end. Lord, this is the Bread of heaven, Bread of life, that whoever eats, never shall hunger more. And this the Cup of pardon, healing, gladness, strength, that whoever drinks, will never thirst again. So may we come, O Lord, to your Table; Lord Jesus, come to us. Amen

[E.Milner White]

Sunday 23rd August [Trinity 12] John 6:56-69

Holy One of God, who alone has the words of eternal life; when our vision fails and our understanding is darkened, live in our hearts by faith. Give us your Spirit who is able to enlarge trust when understanding is not clear and deepen faith even when sight is dim; that we may continue on in quiet and patient confidence. Make us all that we should be towards you, without grumbling or offence. Be with us everywhere and at all times, in all events and circumstances of our life; to sanctify and sweeten to us whatever takes place. Never leave us or forsake us in our present pilgrimage here, until we see the Son of Man in glory. Amen.

Sunday 30th August [Trinity 13] Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

Eternal God, forgive us when we have worshipped you in vain; when we have honoured you with our lips whilst our hearts have been far from you. When we have let go of eternal truth to hold on to human teachings - ignoring your specific commands and substituting our own rules instead. So enlighten our spirits, that the night of sin and the mists of error may be driven away by your inward shining. Give to your Church a new vision and a fresh understanding, that the eternal message of your Son, undefiled by human traditions, may be hailed as the good news of the new age; through Him who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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