



My Two Grandfathers

In the spring of 2014 I visited the beautiful Schallaburg castle in Lower Austria to see an exhibition about the First World War. The exhibition was special as the organisers had chosen to present this global disaster in the life stories of 25 very ordinary men and women, who had struggled through the Great War as combatants on deadly fronts or with keeping up life 'back home'. There they were: soldiers who had previously ploughed fields, and nurses who had come straight from a classroom; engineers firing heavy artillery, and doctors trying to deal with the terrible wounds these weapons inflicted. There was an Aboriginal prisoner of war, and a Jewish war correspondent from Galicia; there were individuals from British, French and German colonies in Africa, drawn into a faraway fight for hegemony, and Americans pulled into the war's decisive

phase without knowing much about the history of Europe's struggling empires.

As I moved through the disturbing display of the suffering we are able to inflict on each other, I was sadly reminded that it was all closer to me than I was prepared to admit. My two grandfathers had fought in the Great War: my German grandfather in the battles of the Somme, and my Austrian grandfather on the Isonzo front. As they weren't officers, no records of them were kept in the military archives. Like millions of others they served and put their lives on the line. They were fortunate to survive, but were strangely broken after. They would never talk about the war: haunted by the traumatic experience of having killed and of having seen comrades being killed.

Growing up after World War Two, my brothers and I weren't really aware that

our grandfathers had fought against the British, French and Italians, and that these people had once been our 'enemies'. We went to Italy for holidays; our parents taught us to love not only the beaches but also the people, and their deep appreciation for art and beauty. My mother learned Italian to be able to speak with the locals - and to bargain in the many markets! Later, we went to Britain to improve our English, and to France to learn something in the museums of Paris. My best friend during my student days was a Welsh girl, so I learned early on to respect and appreciate difference.

Today, ever more young people participate in cultural exchanges, like the EU-based Erasmus programme. One of my nieces studied in France, and is convinced: 'You can never forget the life you have shared together.' Young people study and work abroad, marry and



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experience a new mixing of cultures and lifestyles that does not cling to the past, but rather asks what the common future should look like.

Peace is a quality of relationships; it needs to be practised and nurtured. It is a process that requires a stable environment, a framework, time and money (still infinitely less money than our assorted defence budgets!). To create such an environment was the declared goal of the European Union and its forerunners, and to the extent that it has become unimaginable that European countries should fight against each other again, the EU is a

peace project and a successful one.

Still, peace is not something we can own: we have to keep pursuing it. Because it may well be that we have simply shifted aggression to another 'other': that it's no longer my Austrian grandfather fighting the Italians, or the 'Tommies' fighting the 'Huns', but all of us fighting the Muslims, the terrorists, and the asylum seekers landing on our coasts and islands.

Reconciliation is about creating a common future, in spite of the harsh memories of the past, and working for it, together with all - really with all!

Reinhild Traitler-Espiritu

First published in We Will Seek Peace and Pursue It: Reflections and prayers for peace and reconciliation, edited Neil Paynter, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications 2015.

The author is former Director of the Protestant Academy Boldern/Zürich, co-founder of the European Project for Interreligious Learning, and President of the Interreligious Conference of European Women. She is a Member of the Iona Community.



Letter

Dear Sr Editor

The poor with you always

Since the very beginning Christians have always sought to help the poor and feed the hungry wherever they found them but they were always realistic as to the root cause of the world's problem - humanity's sin and the only cure - salvation through Jesus Christ. Our Saviour, who taught us to clothe the naked and feed the hungry as if we were feeding and clothing him, also told us that the poor we will always have with us.

Just imagine, for a moment, that it was possible to take all the property in the world by force and divide it equally among the inhabitants. Give, say every person over eighteen years old, an equal portion. Let all share and share alike, and begin the world over again. Do this, and see where you would be at the end of fifty years. You would just have come round to the point where you began. You would just find things as unequal as before. Some would have worked, and some would have been idle. Some would have been always careless, and some always scheming. Some would have sold, and others would have bought. Some would have wasted, and others would have saved and the end would be that some would be rich and others poor.

Why is it that Christians today always seem to be surprised by what is happening in our world and just as alarmed as the atheists and humanists around them and enthusiastically follow their opinions and suggested remedies? Of all people we are supposed to have the perspective of eternity within which to

observe and to evaluate the affairs of humankind, living in this world as ones whose true home is in heaven. But we seem to have forgotten who we are or where we are supposed to be going and have absorbed the world's values.

We are forbidden to show partiality and commanded to love others without restraint but it is simply not Christian teaching to say that all people were meant to be equal. We might as well say that all people ought to be of the same height, weight, strength, and cleverness, - or that all oak trees ought to be of the same shape and size, - or that all blades of grass ought to be of the same length.

Let us always be clear in our minds that the main cause of all the suffering we see in the world is sin - humanity's alienation and rebellion against a holy God - which can only be removed through faith in Christ. Sin is the great cause of the enormous luxury of the rich, and the painful degradation of the poor; of the heartless selfishness of the wealthy and the helpless poverty of the rest. Sin must be first cast out of the world. The hearts of all must be renewed and sanctified. The devil must be bound. The Prince of Peace must come down and take His great power and reign. All this must take place before there can ever be universal happiness and peace, or the gulf be filled up which now divides the rich and poor.

In the meantime we must do all the good we reasonably can in Christ's name but we will never make poverty history until history itself has become history.

Richard Ingham

CULTRA IRISH DISTRICT YOUTH WEEKEND 2015

It is that time of year again

The Cultra weekend will run **06 - 08 November**, and is open to everyone between ages nine and 17. It will be £60 for the weekend and if there are more than two siblings, you only need to pay for two. £10 deposit required. Places VERY limited: we can take only 25 people.

Contact:
djones7642@hotmail.co.uk
07592559600 or the
Moravian Youth UK
Facebook page to contact
Deborah or Roberta.

Moravial 2015

Latest news from the
Provincial Youth and
Children's Office

YOUTH
ZONE

This year's Moravial was held in Estal, just outside of Berlin. All of us were collected at various points throughout the arrival day from our airports and driven to Theologische Hochschule Elstal, where we were greeted warmly by other fellow Moravians. We quickly bonded and became one Moravian family.

Our theme was 'One truth Many faces' and all the activities and Bible studies were connected to this topic. Most days had the set pattern of breakfast, Bible study, games/activity and prayers in the morning. After lunch we had free time before coming together in the evening for a meal, games and fun.

Noticeable exceptions to this structure were on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. On the Thursday we visited Filmpark Babelsberg and were treated to a film tour through the studio as well as being given time to venture on various rides, see a stunt show and enjoy ice creams in the very warm weather. During Saturday we visited Potsdam and via boat trips, plus a photo and quiz challenge, saw various key sights of this beautiful city. On Sunday we visited the Berlin Congregation and enjoyed a memorable Holy Communion service together. After Church we had a fascinating guided tour around East Berlin followed by a trip to a museum to learn more about the Cold War. Following the museum, we were given free time to explore Berlin further. Many of us stayed, enjoying the sights Berlin had to offer late into the evening.

All of us felt that this Moravial had gone brilliantly. On food, accommodation, programme and trips everyone gave positive feedback. The group found that the hosts had provided a thought-provoking theme and had managed to create a programme with the right balance of Bible study, learning and reflection versus fun, down-time and trips. The group had bonded naturally and mutual respect, listening and learning from one another had resulted automatically.

In my opinion, Moravials are a fantastic opportunity for us, in what is often known as 'the missing generation', to connect with other young adults from the same denomination. It also provides an opportunity to discuss and learn how Moravian churches in different provinces worship and lead their youth and children's programmes. More importantly, meeting others from around the globe enables you tangibly to feel how connected we all are as brothers and sisters in Christ.

The years from eighteen to thirty is when we develop our characters, discern how each of us can serve God with our gifts, and learn to stand on our own two feet as Christians and Moravians without the previous level of day-to-day support from our families.



Meeting others of a similar age during this time, I think is key to creating a sense of belonging and support from and with fellow Moravians. In terms of how it will impact on our ability to serve the Moravian church regarding youth and children's work, encouraging deeper or new friendships amongst volunteers not only in a province, but also further afield, can only continue to enhance how the youth and children's work is done. It will encourage us to continue sharing ideas, strategies and tips as well as providing us with a support network, a group of people to call on in times of need, who have the same passion, desire and conviction to pass on the message of Christ and build future disciples amongst the Moravian youth and children.

Although connections are made amongst volunteers at Summer Camp or in other leadership roles, the Moravial provides an informal space, away from the role of being a person in a position of responsibility, to create deeper friendships and to share vision and hope for oneself and for the Moravian Church.

Personally, I had never volunteered at Summer Camp because I had not grown up attending a Moravian Church weekly. The Moravial enabled me to meet others with a similar passion who are Moravians; now I feel welcomed, included and as a result I look forward, if needed, to helping at a Summer Camp in the future. Moravials can be a form of outreach, to some who slip past the normal channels of connecting with those of a similar age within the province.

Overall, the Moravial was fantastic. In terms of its future, I hope Moravials continue to be advertised via Facebook, the Messenger, personal emails and amongst the Congregations. Other ideas we talked about whilst in Berlin were more creative ways of advertising events in general. Promoting the Moravial and other Big Adventures such as Summer Camp should also perhaps be a priority at the festivals of Christmas and Easter if we wish to connect with all those who could potentially attend such events. In my experience, it is at these times of year that people who attend other churches often seek the sanctuary of their home Moravian Church.

On behalf of all who attended this year's Moravial: Thank you for sending us. It was a true blessing!

Laura Wood



Martinmas - A liturgy for peace

In November we reflect on War and the absence of War, through Remembrance Sunday, the closest to Armistice Day, 11 November. This was the day in 1918 when the Great Powers of Europe formally stopped fighting each other. This year we have as well the refugee crisis caused by current wars. This issue of the Messenger covers both subjects, through mainland European and British responses.

We will all have different approaches to how we use Remembrance Sunday. This day has become marked again in public life during recent times, and rightly includes the recognition of the suffering war causes, and the range of civilian and military casualties it inflicts.

I struggle with it, having seen war and having, like many people, relatives damaged by war. I am convinced that war never causes peace. Then, in my last year as minister in Swindon I was asked to be Mayor's chaplain, and had a role in the respectful civic service that focusses on past war.

This year I was asked to write a liturgy for use in Remembrance services for peace, for an online publication so that the material can be adapted to local circumstances. How, I asked, can we best offer for use in worship something that reflects our society's needs, that praises and thanks our Creator, while acknowledging our part in a world endlessly at war with its neighbour?

I took as the focus a fourth-century saint, Martin of Tours, who was a Christian at twelve, a conscripted soldier at 15, and finally a monk whose monastery was visited for inspiration and guidance by most of the early saints of Ireland and Britain. Martin's biography tells of how, having given away most of his clothes, he cut his cloak in half to share it with a poor man. He is well-known in popular tradition as a saint of the poor, the young and the voiceless. In Germany children hold torchlight processions on his feast-day, 11 November.

The armistice, discussed for two months and then agreed on 09 November, was held back for the feast of the soldier turned saint, signed that morning, and came into effect only at 11 am. How many lives could have been saved if the agreement had led to immediate ceasefire?

Saint Martin's Day, Martinmas, was traditionally the day in the agricultural year when the slaughter of animals for winter food started. In 1918 the slaughter of human beings stopped. Martinmas was a day for paying rent, for

winter hiring fairs for farmworkers, a time of change. A late spell of good weather was known as Saint Martin's Summer, an extra gift before the onset of winter. The symbolism and stories are complex, and speak to us at many levels.

Writing a liturgy can be helped by recovering past significance, and then presenting it afresh. It requires seeking passages of scripture, finding hymns to suit, keeping the ear open to whether the words of the prayers reflect and assist the communal worship of God. It is also a bit like writing music - several levels have to be drawn together to make worship, for the praise of God and the renewal of the community. In modern times liturgy can include the projected image. I used the biblical scenes carved on the ninth-century Saint Martin's cross on Iona, which speak of innocence, of sacrifice, of God's desire for peace in the world so lovingly created.

Martinmas proved a time for remembering the children caught up in conflict, the civilians who cannot escape bombardment, or struggle as refugees on the road; and those too who went to war, and died, or returned with memories that might stay with them for life. Liturgy involves acknowledging the past and honouring what was done with good intent; and it means too stretching our hearts together to seek new ways of living in the world, at peace with as many of our neighbours in the world that we can reach. This year, it opened new ways to see how we can approach the issue of conflict past and present in our world; and how we, like Martin, might turn to seek through prayer and actions to work for the world to be the place God intended it to be.

Rosemary Power

Photos: David Coleman.

8 Thou shalt not steal

The eighth of the Ten Commandments seems a straightforward enough instruction - a simple moral imperative. It's one of the most basic elements of civilized behaviour that you should not take what is not yours. As a crime it has a long and colourful history, and yet it is perhaps not as simple as it seems.

A legal definition of stealing suggests that it means dishonestly taking anything belonging to someone else with the intention of permanently depriving the owner of it. Until the 1820s it was a capital offence if the value of what was stolen was more than one shilling. This gave rise to the maxim that one might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb - meaning that if you were going to take something, you might as well go for the best and most valuable. Dickens' novels memorably explored the crime and its consequences, especially in *Oliver Twist* (1837-8).

Scholars reveal that in ancient Jewish law this commandment originally meant taking away a person, and thus was what we would now call *kidnapping*. If you took someone away from their circumstances to use them perhaps as a slave, you deprived them of their basic rights, and thus you were not treating them as a neighbour. Knowing this gives greater weight to Our Lord's reinforcing the 'Greatest Commandment' as being to love the Lord Your God, and your neighbour as yourself. Those engaged in what we glibly call 'people trafficking' have profited hugely from their callous disregard for life. Initially those with access to boats would demand exorbitant fees simply to allow potential migrants to board a vessel. Many perished in the process. Some measure of control has ensued: the money paid buys a code number, and only when this number is delivered to agents on arrival is the money handed over.

It may be thought that simply stealing another's property is included in the commandment against coveting another's assets - it covers similar ground. In this wider sense it embraced not just the furtive removing of an article, but the destruction of relationships, with enormous repercussions. One way of stealing financial resources is to fiddle expenses - a blatant betrayal of the call to stewardship. It's thought that some areas of business have institutionalized this, all of which potential customers - or in the example of MPs the taxpayers - have to pay for. Going on "jollies" is another example.

We all have what the law has come to regard as property rights, and social inequality has always borne the inherent temptation of those with less wanting more, and taking it for themselves, given an opportunity. Drama, in whatever medium, would hardly exist without the opportunity of portraying such crime as a form of entertainment, and some of the most audacious thefts have become legends in their own right. The false pride engendered in thinking you've got away with it has also given rise to a multitude of imaginative portrayals.

Stealing does not merely involve taking something from its owner in order to keep it, or maybe sell it (an equally heinous offence is handling stolen property). In recent years there have been so many instances of vast losses brought about through the clever manipulation of circumstances. The ever-increasing power of computers has brought an entirely new dimension to this. Here the eleventh Commandment (Thou shalt not be found out) offers its credentials. The Libor episode in 2012 exposed much underhand activity. The London Inter-Bank Offered Rate is calculated at a certain time each day to determine market guidelines for the following day's trading. It was realized that it could be distorted by feeding in huge sums just before the deadline, and using the speed of computers to delete them immediately afterwards. This would create more favourable trading conditions which would artificially increase 'rewards'. The latest example of such manipulation has been the use of software to alter crucial facts in testing motor vehicle emissions, giving rise to more advantageous evidence which in turn has distorted hugely valuable markets. All such activity takes away far more than ownership of certain assets: it takes away and undermines trust. Without this fundamental quality in evidence, so much of human endeavour is undermined, with shattering consequences for so many.

Is there such a thing as a victimless crime? In the great Ealing comedy *The Ladykillers* (1955) old Mrs Robinson defeats a gang of train robbers simply by being herself. The criminals are disposed of, one by one, leaving her with £50,000 in cash. She's told she can keep it; the insurance company having paid out, it would only mean one farthing more on everyone's policy. Would this really matter? It's a somewhat simplistic conclusion, but it leads to a great deal of crime which these days seems to be taken for granted. But who can forget the retribution when the last of the gang is felled by a falling signal arm?

David Bunney



A Minister Reflects

Kit Shorten of Gomersal congregation writes on the archives for the Great War

In 2014 it was my privilege to be part of a small group of residents looking into how we could best remember the Great War. It struck me that much of the changes faced by our local forebears would be of national interest, as they were changes that were happening not just in Moravian communities, but in churches the length and breadth of this country.

I was astounded by the wealth of material waiting to be discovered in the Gomersal Church archives. (By comparison, there is very little recorded about the Second World War). With the help of the Church, I reproduced this research in a printed booklet *The Great War Minister's Diary*. Unfortunately, due to limitations with page numbers, I had to omit the minister's Memorabilia. This was disappointing. Whereas the *War Diary* focuses on the day to day effects of war, the *Memorabilia* provides fascinating and poignant insights into the angst faced by ministers in times of great struggle, difficult questions that may not have answers, their hopes for a brighter future and their praise for a congregation's resolve to carry on when faced by adversity.

It's fitting that these annual reflections were penned by our minister at that time, Br Walter Stooke. Perhaps by providence, his five-year ministry at Gomersal exactly straddles the Great War years, from late 1913 to early 1919. As a whole, they show how the mood of the country, and the Church, changed over the duration of a prolonged conflict.

Over the coming months, selected passages from his memorabilia will be transcribed here in an abridged form. What is written, however, is how it was recorded by Br Stooke, in his own words.

In the October issue of the *Messenger*, much was said of the current and ongoing refugee crisis. Br Michael Newman and Sr Hilary Smith have already reflected upon how 250,000 Belgian refugees were easily and quickly received and integrated in our society during the Great War, and this is alluded to in Br Stooke's memorabilia for 1914.

Kit Shorten

Memorabilia for 1914

Abridged. Read at the Lovefeast on 10 January, 1915.

The passage of time brings us again to the end of our year and the beginning of another. Once more a brief record of the congregation life during 1914 is laid before you. We acknowledge with gratitude the Divine Protection and Guidance during the year. The head of the Church has given us times of encouragement and has permitted us to learn that our fellowship is not only with one another but also with Himself.

We bid a temporary farewell to the Brothers Harold Furness and David Ernest Wright; both of whom are serving their Country in the armies now in the course of training. Of course their names remain, and we hope always will remain, in our books. We hope in God's great mercy they will be spared to resume their places in homes and Church, but for the moment we miss them. Brother Furness has been giving excellent service in the school and choir and we have missed his willing help in many ways. May the Lord guard them and guide them in their outgoings and incomings. Congregation life has outwardly pursued its even way.

The special meetings, Anniversaries, Festivals and the like have all been held, and each has shown growth of interest and affection for the Church. In some respects we are not satisfied! It is not right that we should be. There is always room for improvement. Amongst ourselves there is a steady fervent love and capacity which is most welcome and refreshing, and we are thankful. It is amongst those whose connection with us is not very close and who are more easily amenable to the world's indifference that our sphere of work has and is thus rendered difficult. A minister can do much perhaps, but consecrated Christ like members can do almost more.

What have we done in 1914? The Congregation has had during 1914 to consider extraordinary expenditure. The state of the Burial Ground and Church has become such that work must be done in these properties in the immediate future. It will be remembered that the Council authorised the formation of a Bazaar Committee and it was decided to hold a Bazaar in the Mechanics Institute. Machinery was created and a large number of members and adherents and friends promised their support in working up various stalls and special efforts. Collectors sold coupons and in many homes of adherents and friends I found quite steady work proceeding. "This is for the Bazaar" I was told, and some piece of material beautifully worked was displayed. Jam, marmalade and sweet making was taken up with energy, and scent and cards were sold. For all these efforts by whomsoever rendered we give our warmest thanks.

But in August came the bolt from the blue, the outbreak of war has disarrayed our plans, and it was felt that some modification of our first scheme would be necessary. The Bazaar Committee met and decided to hold a Sale of Work in the schoolroom on March 18 and 20, 1915. Let us now prepare and work for this and show how much with God's gracious help we can overcome the difficulties so unexpectedly thrown into our path!

The war above alluded to merits special attention. For this war has touched us in our religious life as well as in our social and economic relations. The war will produce undoubtedly many changes in the nation's financial status and economical and industrial life. For the present, the West Riding of Yorkshire is labouring under a burden of work. The armies of Britain and the Allies have to be clothed and so we know many of you are working to the point of exhaustion. This, of course, affects Church life. Week night activities are restricted in attendance and have lost workers. The needs of the Belgian Refugees are seeking assistance from our Congregation workers. Sister Bull has the oversight of a district on behalf of our Church, aided by two Young Women who collect weekly subscriptions towards the fund. The war has also forced to the front the moral issues of life. Men are beginning to see that teachings in the past with respect to the Moral Law bear their fruit. When, as in the case of Germany, it is concluded that the State is not subject to the Moral Law and the teaching of Christ is repudiated, we trust either assent or dissent. Great Britain has taken up the field in order to keep her word and because we believe that there is a Power above all human combinations and nations, a Power who favours righteousness and Whom we worship as God and Father. It will be our lot to emphasise and persist in fostering this faith. The war is already pointing out our duty as Christian believers.

More Teachers are needed in the School. On the boys side especially, additions to the staff are required. Again, I remind you we are all called upon to teach, and the teaching can be of many methods. Boys especially learn from our doings as well as from our words. What we do is the great example to them. If our children are to come after us in serving the cause of good and of the Church, we the grown-ups must do these same things. The school needs such men. Can we provide them? Can any of you serve?

In conclusion: May the Minister venture on a word of counsel suggested by the review of the past years events? It is simply this, "Seek the things that are above." The tendencies around us are all the other way. There is a danger lest our distinctive calling as Christian believers and followers of the Christ who is Son of God should be submerged in the press of more mundane and transitory things. But it is in the quest for the Highest that the soul finds its life. It is in the contact with the Saviour by faith, Who touches us in the truths that He makes alive, that the soul finds its power; and although the world would draw the Church away from this quest, that same world has no mercy on the Church that fails to accomplish it. "Seek the things that are above". We need not neglect any other duty or relinquish any effort. We are already making to help and interest our friends. Rather in these varied activities of the Church's life let there be the upward spring and the Heavenward look, for we only move onward by moving upward.

Notice Board

Fulneck Christmas Tree Festival Weekend

'Christmas Around the World'

Friday 27th November at 7.30pm - Handel's Messiah performed by St Peter's Singers

Saturday 28th November from 10am to 4pm
- Church open

Sunday 29th November from 1pm to 4pm
- Church open

Refreshments and souvenirs available

Frances Young gives this year's Hook Memorial Lecture:

Fragile Creation.

Tuesday 10 November at Leeds Minster
(LS2 7DJ) at 7.30.

This year's lecture talks about the vocation of people with severe learning disabilities, drawing on the experience of her son and a journey of faith in the face of his disabilities. Admission is free but by ticket only. Contact LCI at 0113 391 7928, or email events@leedschurchinstitute.org

'The Hook Lectures are jointly organised by Leeds Church Institute, Leeds Minster, and Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds. They bring together faith communities, the university and the city by addressing themes related to public life and the common good.'

New address for Sr Gloria I David

Hillside Cottage, 35 The Settlement, Ockbrook, Derby, DE72 3RJ. 01332-902038, gloria.david@pobroadband.co.uk

Refugee Stories

The Joint Public Issues Team would like to hear from you! If you have any stories that offer practical examples of how your church is helping in the current refugee crisis then get in touch. We want to hear from churches that could give guidance to others who are eager to help but may not know how. If you think you have such a story send it to toppingb@methodistchurch.org.uk

The European Mainland Province and the Refugee question

(mainly from the perspective of the German region)

The refugee question has been topical for a long time in the European Mainland Province. After the 'Wende' ('Change') in the early 90s, when the first blocks of flats in East Germany were settled by refugees, the Moravian Church co-operated in setting up an ecumenical refugee support group in Leipzig. At the end of the 90s and most recently in 2014, Synod charged our congregations with supporting refugees in our Länder (federal states).

In a mission statement of 2012 the Moravian Church's migration experiences in the past were highlighted: refugees from Moravian founded Herrnhut. After the Second World War, brothers and sisters came from Silesia to settle in the west. Moravians from Suriname migrated to the Netherlands in the 70s. The mission statement draws the following conclusion: As the Moravian Church we bring a fundamental openness towards refugees. Literally, it means: Because migration has had a huge influence on our Church, we can overcome borders. Whether this will be proved in practice when refugees come to us in greater numbers, remains to be seen.

In the past it was almost always individuals who declared themselves as refugees - often with ecumenical co-operation. The Königsfeld congregation, which a number of years ago accompanied a Syrian-Aramaic family through a 'Church asylum' process, is one such example. Immediately after the Synod resolution of 2014, a refugee support group was set up there. In many congregations, brothers and sisters work in collaboration with other support groups and initiatives to help refugees. There are families who have opened their home long-term for refugees.

Other groups organise donations and visit refugees in their quarters. In one congregation runs a German course, and elsewhere in the church halls, people cook together. In other congregations, their church flats have been let to refugees and the pastor or volunteers are responsible for them. In Berlin, the

young people want to take action to facilitate more meetings with refugees.

That few congregations have not joined this initiative is in part due to the fact that many of our congregations are often in rural communities where until recently, other than in large cities, there was no talk of large numbers of refugees. The long-planned-for influx of about 50-80 refugees in small places such as Herrnhut or Königsfeld has not yet materialised and would in no way overwhelm those communities. A freestanding boarding house belonging to the Zinzendorf school in Königsfeld could not be reclassified for use by refugees due to bureaucratic obstacles.

The Provincial Board has nevertheless called on all congregations to adopt an active role in the reception of refugees. Christian communities and their networks play a decisive role in the so far largely positive experience in dealing with the accommodation of refugees in Germany.

In November, the annual conference on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation will be taking the refugee issue as its theme. We are hoping for a new impetus from this.

In the German population there are, of course, some quite loud voices asking the German government to reconsider its position and to strengthen the country's borders in order to limit the right to asylum. Even politicians in their own coalitions issue warnings. In the Moravian Church the opinion of the Chancellor's (Mrs Merkel's) attitude is, in my opinion, somewhat divided: we can accept this crisis as a challenge and as a test of our faith, look to the one who said: 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me.' (Matthew 25:35)

Benigna Carstens

Provincial Board, Continental Province

Translated by Jackie Morton

Letter from the ECP PEC to their congregations re: refugee crisis



18 September 2015

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We have all been greatly affected by the images and reports on the news each day of ever more refugees at the European borders. Thousands are coming to Germany, thousands are stranded at border fences and in camps in Eastern and Southern Europe, thousands have died in the Mediterranean Sea. Many of us feel impelled to welcome those men, women and children who seek refuge among us and to make a stand against the fears and the stirring up of xenophobia. For hospitality and love of one's neighbour stand at the heart of our Christian faith.

We are glad that some congregations have for a number of years already been used for refugee groups - mainly in an ecumenical context.

The 'working group for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation' set up at Synod 2014, had its first meeting at the beginning of September and, in the light of the current refugee situation, concerned itself with looking at what concrete possibilities we, as the Moravian Church, have to do something to help refugees.

As the church leadership of the European Continental Province, we support the suggestions of the working group and we pass them on to you.

We are systematically looking at which of our property might be placed at the disposal of accommodation for refugees and, when a vacancy occurs, we will give priority to accommodating refugees. For the 2015 annual offering, we indicated that wanted to give financial support to aid for refugees, and we will furthermore examine where we might be able to support refugee projects within congregations, if help should be needed.

Today we would encourage you, as congregations and as individuals, to consider whether you have accommodation in your homes or in congregation property that you could make available on a short-term basis for refugees.

Equally as important however, are personal contact and encounters with refugees in our neighbourhoods. There are many possibilities for congregations to get involved (for example, in building relationships with refugees who are housed nearby through home visits, invitations to events or excursions, in teaching the German language).

Soon congregations will be making plans for Advent and Christmas. As we celebrate Christmas, we will also think of those who have come among us. How can we include them in our plans? Could we invite them for a Christmas meal in our church hall? Other celebrations are good opportunities to meet each other in a relaxed way and break down barriers.

In order to develop ideas and put them into practice, we need brothers and sisters in all congregations to get involved. We ask you urgently to set up a working group as soon as possible in your congregation, to work on this issue. This group will take soundings on behalf of the congregation about what is needed in the community and what would be possible. It will develop initiatives and make contact with other groups and organisations in the area since we can use the shared experience and expertise of dealing with refugees, the local authorities and the public and we should co-operate with existing projects.

Even those congregations who hitherto have had very little to do with the refugee situation, are asked to engage with this theme and to set up a working group. We don't know how or when we may be faced with new challenges. None of us can be unaffected by this situation. Those people who come to us, even after their acute distress is relieved, will for a long time need other people to help them feel at home in a foreign land.

With fraternal greetings,

Johannes Welschen

Translated by Jackie Morton

'Church asylum': Refugees, whose asylum applications have been turned down and who are therefore liable for deportation, live in church-owned accommodation, until their appeals through the courts have been heard. Church asylum is recognised in practice, even though it is legally unrecognised. Over 90% of church asylum cases end in the refugee being allowed to settle legally in Germany - this was so in the Königsfeld example.

Congregation News

Fetter Lane

Spring and summer were busy times, rain or shine. Among the highlights was our MWA circle's visit to the Harlesden congregation to join in their Anniversary Service, following an earlier visit that the Harlesden sisters made to us. Our leader, Norah Proctor, gave an inspiring address reflecting the theme, 'With God in the Garden'. After Norah's message and prayers, and many favourite hymns, we joined in good food and conversation in the church hall.

04 July was the date of our annual barbeque in the lovely grounds of God's Acre in Moravian Close. Food was plentiful, the sun was shining and the fellowship among congregation and Chelsea neighbours all made for a great day.

Being good stewards of the historic close and burial ground requires us now to undertake some important works to preserve the Tudor wall surrounding the Close. With advice from English Heritage, we await the results of a commissioned survey and options for carrying out the phased repairs over the coming year.



Cynthia Dize

Sr Norah Proctor with Sr Audrey Kendall

Our Heritage Open Day was a success despite the weather. The theme was inspired by the 600th anniversary of the trial and martyrdom of Jan Hus and the story was followed with interest according to comments made in the Visitors' Book. The dramatisation of "The trial of Jan Hus in 5 minutes" was performed five times during the day and was well received and explained the day's theme succinctly.

The Settlement Tours were much enjoyed as always and the people serving refreshments were 'run off their feet'. Visitors were welcomed at the church and introduced to the exhibits which were as follows: The life and work of John Wycliffe (prepared by Fulneck School's Year 7); Jan Hus's early life (Junior Church); his university life and development of his beliefs; his preaching career and translations so that ordinary people could read the Bible and follow services; the

Hussite Wars; Gregory and the first Brethren's Church at Kunvald; the years of exile and periods of their being accepted; exile again and Comenius supporting them; then Christian David and his association with Count Zinzendorf resulting in their being given refuge at Berthelsdorf in Germany where they founded Herrnhut.

The last display depicted the Moravians missionary zeal as they began to spread their influence in the world resulting in the founding of Fulneck. All the displays were attractively presented. The archive was open as was an associated picture gallery; there were organ recitals, children's activities and competitions for all. The exhibition is still on show in the Boys' Brigade when the museum is open on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons.

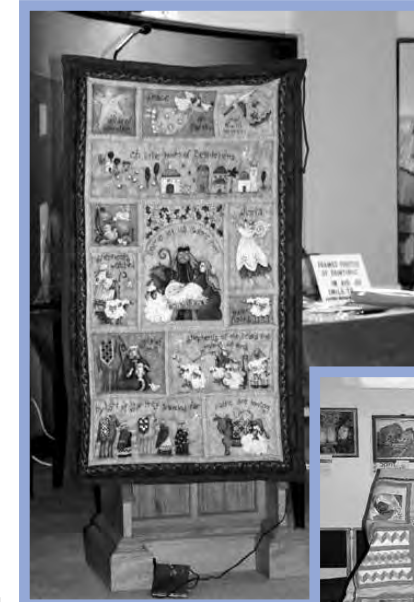
David Ingham

There was a bacon butty morning and book stall on 22 March. On 08 April there was a coffee morning at the home of Br and Sr Woods for the MWA. We had a Council meeting on 22 March after our morning service. We had our gift day on 13 June. On 12 September we had an afternoon tea in the Sunday school this was well attended and a good fund raiser. In August we had a café church led by Sr Maureen Colbert, this was on the theme of a day at the seaside and was well attended and brought some new people in to the building, and one or two have come to our

service since. On Sunday 06h September some members joined in the open air service around the local area with other churches and their members. We now welcome to our church our new ministers, Sr Lorraine Shorten who is on a placement for two years. We also welcome Br James Woolford who will be helping us once a month, so we look forward to many years of fellowship together. We were saddened to hear about the passing away of Mavis Whalley whilst on holiday. Our thoughts and our prayers go out to Brian and the family at this time.

Kingswood

On 11 and 12h September we had an art and craft exhibition in our Church of work done by members and friends of our congregation. There was a wide range of work to see including patchwork, quilting, cross stitch, hand embroidery, free machine embroidery, knitting, oil and water colour painting, pencil sketching, wood work, home-made cards and floral displays. The standard of work was very high and it was a privilege to be able to appreciate the skills and talents of local people.



We had a steady stream of visitors coming in plus the local press and Dr Margaret Bates from the United Mission to Nepal to whom a good proportion of our knitted items go. Light lunches, drinks and home-made cakes were available so that people could relax and take their time to enjoy everything and chat.

Entry to the exhibition was free but donations were invited, which along with sales of refreshments raised almost £300. This has been shared between the United Mission to Nepal and Church funds.

Lorraine Cross

Bedford

We had a cream tea on 08 August at the back of the church. Leaflets were distributed around the park. This was a new venture to attract people. We had outdoor games and twenty people turned up. A total of £178 was made for the church funds.

Eric Moon

Congregational Register

Baptisms		Fairfield
Matthew Lewis	Charles Welsh	28 June
Olivia Emily	Caldecott	26 July
Oliver Issac	Wilkinson	23 August
Josephine Keran	Dacre	27 September
Bobby Henry	Mountfield	27 September
		Fulneck
Thomas Henry	Dockerill Relton	20 September

Marriages

Daniel Keith	McLoughlin and	
Melissa Sue	Shaw	08 August
Matthew John	Luke Hadgraft and	
Samantha Jean	Wild	19 September

Deaths

		Fairfield
Jack	Thompstone	30 July
Kenneth	Frank Deakin	30 August
Alfred	Stonehewer	19 September
		Fulneck
Sr. Joyce	Jones buried	25 September

Letter

Dear Sr Editor

I was lucky enough to be at Br James Woolford's Ordination on Saturday 10th October, at Wellouse. A joyous occasion!

At the end of the service as, helped by his Mum and Dad, he struggled into his new Surplice, my neighbour, a fairly new Moravian (ie not a born and bred one) said to me "if there's ONE thing that indicates the egalitarian nature of the Moravian Church it's that garment." Bishops and Deacons and all the others in between wear, with the odd tweak here and there, exactly the same thing. No gold and purple borders or fancy embroidery, lovely as they can be. Just plain white cotton.

I know that the Surplice is a very significant piece of clothing and that it is an honour and also a responsibility to be able to wear one. I think too that a responsibility rests on each one of us to support and help all our ministers, especially at this time when they are so short on the ground, God bless them all!

Libby Mitchell, Baildon

PS I have just had a memory from many years go. For some reason, illness probably, I must have taken the washing home from the manse to pop in my washer and my neighbour came round and asked "What is that huge nightie floating on the line with the nappies?" (we washed nappies in those long ago days) "Has Charles taken to wearing a night-shirt?".....It was Bob Burd's Surplice!

Fulneck

Horton

Dates to remember

All Saints Day

1

Nov

8

Nov

Remembrance
Sunday

Realisation of the
Headship of Christ,
1741

13

Nov

15

Nov

21

Nov

Inter-Faith
Week

www.interfaithweek.org

Prisons Week

www.prisonsworld.org

15

Nov

21

Nov

World Day of
Remembrance for
Road Traffic Victims
www.roadpeace.org

15

Nov

16

Nov

20

Nov

Anti-Bullying
Week

Advent Sunday

29

Nov

From Church House

2nd - 3rd Nov

PEC, BMB and Estates
Property Meeting - The PEC

4th Nov

Finance Committee,
Church House

7th Nov

EDC, Kingswood - Sr Taylor

11th Nov

World Mission Committee,
Church House

15th Nov

Church Service Sunday

Prayer Notes

Richard Ingham

Sunday 1st November [All Saints' Day] John 11:32-44

Lord Jesus, who wept at the grave of Lazarus your friend; look with compassion on those who mourn. Comfort them with your presence and peace and make them to know that all things work together for good to those who love you. By your death you have overcome death and by your rising again you have restored to us everlasting life, victorious over sin and the grave. Grant that, being risen with you, we may set our affection on things above so that when you - our life - shall appear, we also may appear with you in glory. Amen

Sunday 8th November [3rd Before Advent] Mark 1:14-20

Christ the Lord, who calls your disciples not just to follow you yourselves but to bring in others. Give your grace to those led the ministry of your Church, that they may hear your voice, and with glad hearts obey your call. You have charged your followers to preach the Gospel to the whole creation and to make disciples of all nations. Hasten the time when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in and all Israel shall be saved. Attempting great things for you, may we also expect great things from you, as we obey your command and boldly proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God. Amen

Wednesday 11th November - Armistice Day

Heavenly Father, as we pray for the peace of the world, we claim the peace that comes through faith in Jesus Christ; that having peace in our hearts we may be at peace with our neighbours. Banish violence from our minds and wipe away our tears, so that we may not only be called your sons and daughters, but live as true brothers and sisters in Christ your Son. Draw his scattered flock into a visible unity and make your Church a sign of hope to our divided world; that we who bear the Lord's name may be instruments of your peace, bringing peace to our homes, our nation and our world. Amen

Sunday 15th November [2nd Before Advent] Mark 13:1-8

Teacher, who leads into all truth: give us ready minds at all times to learn what you would teach us so that your word may dwell in us richly. Let your spirit be present with us as we read the Bible, and conform our hearts to its revelation; that our lives may be rooted and built up in you. You have set before us the great hope of your return. Grant us always to watch and pray, so that we may be found among those servants who are ready; looking and waiting for their Lord. Amen.

Sunday 22nd November [Sunday Before Advent] John 18:33-37

King of the Jews, whose sovereign purpose none can make void, give us faith to stand calm and undismayed amid the tumults of the world, knowing that your kingdom shall come and your will be done. Grant that, as we tread with the King the way to the Kingdom, we might find in your wounds our safety, in your stripes our cure, in your pain our peace, in your cross our victory, and in your resurrection our triumph. Amen

Sunday 29th November [Advent Sunday] Luke 21:25-36

Son of Man, who came once to save the world and will come again to be its judge; warning us that heaven and earth will pass away. Speak to our hearts when people faint for fear; when the love of many grows cold, and there is distress of nations upon earth. Keep us resolute and steadfast in those things that cannot be shaken. May we await your return in watchfulness and prayer and joyfully cherish the expectation of our eternal salvation. Trusting in your unfailing promises, grant that our hearts may not be weighed down with the cares of this life, but our heads instead be raised, as our redemption draws near. Amen

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Editor

Rosemary Power
19b Fairfield Square, Manchester M43 6AD
rosemary.power@moravian.org.uk
Contributions for the Messenger should reach the editor by the 3rd day of the preceding month.

Design & Artwork

David Bull
dave@redragdesign.co.uk

Printed & Distribution

G. R. Walkden
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