



## Easter - Humility and Plastic



Three things that could change the way we live and the planet we live on.

At Easter our minds re-focus on the cross and on Jesus' resurrection as a point of hope and salvation. It is the pinnacle to our faith. Yet, before the death and resurrection came the life. St. Augustine believed Jesus' life was meant to be a witness to us in order that we might learn humility from it. It is this belief that I now address. More specifically, what humility could we learn from Jesus' life when it comes to taking care of our world?

At the beginning of January 2016 I made a resolution on a whim. I decided to commit to try and not buy plastic for the whole year. This was not an informed choice. I just decided to do it. Since then, my very supportive husband and I have been having a go at living out my whim with a few exceptions! We allow ourselves medicine, books, toothpaste and equipment for beer- and wine-making but other than this we try and be plastic-free. The change in our way of buying has been eye-opening. Plastic is everywhere. A lot of single-use plastic, plastic which is thrown away after one use, makes up a lot of the average person's weekly food shop.

The U.K. currently generates over five million tonnes of plastic each year and, according to the British Plastics federation, only 24% can currently be recycled due to technological and financial limitations. This is not good

material that some say may never truly break down or at best in around 500 years' time.

We read stories in the Gospels of Jesus eating and drinking, often with friends and followers. One story is of Jesus feeding the 5000. If we look at the version in Matthew Chapter 14, we see Jesus sharing out five loaves and two fish to feed 5000 men and this doesn't include women and children. It's an incredible story, miraculous.

Many might look at this and consider that this speaks to our need to share resources with others. It might cause us to want to take less from the earth and be grateful for what we have - all reflections I agree with but for a moment I want to look at the fish mentioned in this miracle. Today, those pre-caught fish would no longer have just shared their ocean with other creatures. According to S.Thomas, in *Tackling the world's plastic problem*, 'Unless steps are taken... by

2025 the ocean could contain one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of fish'.

This is bad for so many reasons, least of all because most plastics contain Bisphenol A, a chemical which is understood to mimic human oestrogen and which is leaking out of plastic into oceans (Maxwell, 2016). Over time this is likely to enter even more into our food supply. Plastic is also getting into fish, other sea creatures and birds and is killing them as it enters into their digestive system.

If Jesus was to come back today and perform this miracle again, it would potentially look somewhat different. The fish being offered to Jesus might have been wrapped in plastic. Worse still the fish might contain plastic on the inside too.

This analogy might seem silly. We live in such a different world to when Jesus of Nazareth walked this earth. Many people have said that times have changed and we cannot go back to living the way we used to. To a certain extent they are right. We live in a consumerist world which has embraced plastic. Many things are designed based on the malleable properties that it offers and I don't think we can ever go back to a life that is truly plastic free (Steve and I are currently living around the 80-90% plastic-free mark).

*continues inside*



Jane Eyre was a Moravian!

(page 40)



Eastern District training day

(page 46)

## Easter - Humility and Plastic continued

But where is our humility in all of this? Plastic has boomed because as consumers we have loved it and embraced it without considering whether it is good for our planet. If we look to Jesus' ministry, it is one of context - he gave responses to folk based on their situation and was never scared to look hard at society's positions and give them the equivalent of Paddington's 'long hard stare'. Today's companies have forgotten to look at the context beyond the marketing one which they (and to a degree we) have created, to consider how this affects our wider world.

### What might we as Church do about this?

- Individually we can make small lifestyle choices - changing from buying our fruit and vegetables wrapped in plastic to buying them unwrapped.

- Collectively we can write to companies and ask for non-plastic alternatives.
- Similar to Fairtrade products, we could consider selling at Churches non-plastic alternatives such as plant-wrapped toilet roll and kitchen towel.

### Is living a non-plastic lifestyle easy?

My friend sent me this cartoon which links faith and the need to care for the planet together. Caring for the planet isn't always easy in the same way that being a disciple of Jesus isn't always easy, but it can be transforming. We will never shop the same way again. We now have a milkman; and buy vegetables, cheese and fish without plastic. We can make pasta from scratch, clean our teeth using a bamboo toothbrush, and shave with a metal razor. These are simple changes



but ones which are possible for most people, with a little effort. I encourage anyone to have a go at a level they can manage; Moravians are called to be conscious consumers and stewards for God's planet.

For those interested this is a link to my blog: [livingwithoutplasticinenglandblog.wordpress.com](http://livingwithoutplasticinenglandblog.wordpress.com)

Claire Maxwell

References  
BRF (n.d.) Plastic Recycling. Retrieved February 17, 2016 from: [http://www.bpf.co.uk/sustainability/plastics\\_recycling.aspx#ManufacturingWasteLimitedRecyclingGuide](http://www.bpf.co.uk/sustainability/plastics_recycling.aspx#ManufacturingWasteLimitedRecyclingGuide) (n.d.) Recycling Facts and Figures Retrieved January 3, 2016 from: <http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/facts.html>  
Maxwell, C (2016) Tins - Do They Contain Plastic? Retrieved March 3, 2016 from: <https://livingwithoutplasticinenglandblog.wordpress.com/2016/02/27/tins-do-they-contain-plastic/>

Thomas, S. (2015) Tackling the world's plastic problem. Retrieved February 17 2016 from: <https://www.creativereview.co.uk/cr-blog/2015/november/tackling-the-worlds-plastic-problem/>  
Translated by F.J. Sheed (1944) - The Confessions of St. Augustine London: Sheed & Ward  
WebMD (n.d.) How Environmental Exposure May Affect Your Child: The Facts About Bisphenol A. Retrieved March 3 2016 from: <http://www.webmd.com/children/environmental-exposure-head2toe/bpa>

## Resurrection

He strides across the soaking grass

as dawn comes with a sunburst flash

on every blade. Night's blood congeals

in scattered petals; daylight heals

the torn soul's darkness; life renews

as pain's rank sweat is washed in dew.

Spring flowers line the stagnant pools

now slowly stirring by fresh rules

till water flows on clear and free

in deep ravines towards the sea.

And I who missed what happened there

while still asleep breathe in new air.

Margaret Connor

## Encounter

We picked him up just out of Slough -  
he looked honest enough -  
and anyhow we needed the company:  
sometimes it's easier to confide in a stranger  
and it helped that he knew nothing  
of recent events in the City.

Two coffees on at the next Services  
we began to unravel  
the disillusionment of our days  
and laid on him  
the agony of our abandoned hopes.  
But he forced us to think again -  
and we didn't want to think -  
we'd had enough of ecstasy and pain.

We would have left him there -  
this stranger who offered no peace -  
yet something impelled us to carry him on  
and then, considering the hour,  
we invited him to share a meal  
at Milton Keynes.

Later as we revived the wonder  
of discovering his identity,  
we shuddered too,  
to think how easily  
we might have missed him.

(Once in his lifetime each man walks  
with Christ to Emmaus - Oscar Wilde)

Margaret Connor

## Mothering Sunday

From the Hornsey  
Sunday school

She is very pretty  
She is very nice  
I love her very much

Angel

You let me go to any school that  
I feel comfortable at  
and sometimes you let  
me stay up late at night.

Zion

We love all mums  
As they help us out  
so much. We care about  
them because they are always there.

Isabelle

You buy me lots of toys  
and also lets me do  
experiments.  
I Love you Mummy

Zahara

You take care  
Of me. She does my hair  
and cuts my nails. You really care.  
She cooks me lovely  
Dinners too.  
She taught me to ride a bike.

Miracle

Your unconditional love and  
Generous touch  
You strive to make me do right and your  
Kisses keep me warm at night.  
Even though sometimes I scream.  
None of those words I ever mean.  
You're always there (sometimes too much)  
But none can deny your unconditional love.  
Thank you mum.

Elysee

## From Belfast Trideum: *Easter*

*After the ceasefire*

*Jesus cooked a meal.*

*The Lord Chief Justice came*

*curious, his wife with trepidation.*

*The fox strutted out of his hole,*

*brushed, sleek,*

*and found his desires before him:*

*Joanna took him in hand.*

*The son of the father was washed,*

*slicked, shocked and supported*

*by Martha and Matthew, and met his replacement.*

*There was a hush when Judas pushed*

*the gate and Magdalen moved up.*

*Simon arrived from manoeuvres,*

*dirty red hands carried rounds,*

*widows paid prices, bought spices,*

*there were children grown bent who went straight*

*when the doors of the shore were opened*

*and the wounded came in and sat down.*

Rosemary Power

(First published Coracle, autumn 2014)

## More Missing Vowels for Easter, Ascension and Pentecost

by Augustus Gottlieb

You may recall from a previous quiz page that one of Augustus Gottlieb's favourite TV shows is the devious BBC2 quiz programme, "ONLY CONNECT".

Just to remind you, each episode of the quiz ends with the "MISSING VOWELS" round, where words or phrases have had the vowels removed; the remaining consonants are squashed up together and then respaced just to cause further confusion. The contestants then have to identify the word or phrase in question.

Augustus Gottlieb has prepared twenty new "MISSING VOWELS" taken from the first lines of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost hymns, all of which can be found in the 2010 edition of the Moravian Hymn Book.

The answers are on page 48.

- LLH LTHP WRFJ SSNM
- CHR STSLV LTCHR STN SSNG
- GDSGN PNHGH
- THDY FRSR RCTN
- CMD WNL VD VN
- LDL KLM BT THSL GHTR
- SPR TRLR DGD
- THSJY FLST RTD
- NMFL LMJ STY
- GDCH RSTNS LLRJC NDSNG
- JS SLVS YRTR RRS NW
- SN SNDD GHTR SFT HKNG
- THST RFSR THBT TLDN
- SP RTF GRC
- HL YSP RTWW LCMY
- CRW NHM WTH MN YCR WNS
- THRS SPRTN THR
- WHNT WFR NDSN STRDY
- JNL LTHG LRS NMS
- NWTH GRNB LDRS THFR MTHB RDGRN

## MORAVIAN MEN'S FELLOWSHIP STONECAST PLAQUES

INDOOR or OUTDOOR USE

Hand Painted  
& Vanished

FULL COLOUR £20.00

BRONZE / SLATE £18.00

plus postage for  
immediate delivery.

We will try to arrange  
delivery by hand.



Available from: Rev. K.G.Evans 01924 496967  
or email: [k.evans10@ntlworld.com](mailto:k.evans10@ntlworld.com)

# Jane Eyre was a Moravian!



## It's true.

*Jane Eyre* - the title Charlotte Brontë gave to her most popular novel, was also the name of a real person living in West Yorkshire during Charlotte Brontë's lifetime. Miss Eyre's friends and family had many links with the Brontës.

What's more, for over 30 years, Miss Eyre was a member of the Moravian congregation at Fulneck.

Charlotte Brontë was born exactly 200 years ago this month, 21 April 1816. Like the 'abundant shower of curates' Charlotte wrote about in Shirley, there are many celebrations about the Brontës this year. What better time to re-visit the little known discovery of the Moravian Jane Eyre?

*Jane Eyre* was published in 1847. It is a common opinion that Charlotte had taken the title of her novel from some Eyres in Hathersage, Derbyshire, where Charlotte had stayed in 1845. However, there is no Jane Eyre in that family's records. The Moravian Jane Eyre and her connections with the Brontës pre-date 1845 by several years.

Many of you will be familiar with the works of Sr Margaret Connor. Evidence of her literary skills often grace the pages of this periodical. A little under 20 years ago, Margaret first read of the factual Jane Eyre, or Frances Jane Eyre, quite by accident. The name was almost obscured; scrawled deep inside a dusty Fulneck manuscript. But, it was

unquestionably Jane Eyre. As a young adult, Miss Eyre was applying to join the Single Sister's House at Fulneck. Little more was mentioned of Miss Eyre in the archives, and Margaret dismissed her find as one of those quirks of history that sometimes raises one's eyebrows, but is soon forgotten about. After all, Jane Eyre often appears listed as one of the best novels ever written in English literature. As such, the subject and its author have been, and still are, extensively researched and commented upon. Margaret herself noted how there was nothing at this time to connect her Jane Eyre to Charlotte Brontë. However, perhaps by providence, it would not be long before the Moravian Jane Eyre would appear to Margaret again.

Several months after her initial discovery, Margaret was given a hitherto unknown and unpublished memoir for safe-keeping at Fulneck Museum. The memoir had been written by Mary Susan Clemens, née Liley. Within the pages of Mary's Fireside Reminiscences, Margaret read about the extensive travels of the Liley family. At times, Mary had lived in West Yorkshire. Many of the Moravian places and names mentioned by Mary were familiar to Margaret. Other names would be just as familiar to Brontë scholars; Rev. Hammond Roberson and William Cartwright (both linked in history to the Luddites, a theme Charlotte re-imagined through Shirley), the Cockill sisters (associated with Charlotte's school at Roe Head, Mirfield), Rev. Cyril Hall (a colleague of Charlotte's who was also portrayed in

Shirley), and not least Ellen Nussey (Charlotte's lifelong best friend and confidant). Mary and Ellen were distantly related via the Cockills, and attended services together at the churches of Rev. Hall and Rev. Roberson.

Mary also included accounts of her time at Fulneck. As Margaret read about Mary's recollections of her schooldays, one seemingly insignificant sentence leapt off the page:

'Jane Eyre, afterwards married to the late J Machill of Pudsey, was another school fellow...'

Her curiosity piqued, Margaret eagerly read on:

'My acquaintance with Mrs Machill was resumed on our appointment to Fulneck, of which congregation Miss Eyre considered herself a member.'

Miss Eyre had therefore been a pupil at Fulneck School with Mary during the 1830s, and had returned to Fulneck in the 1840s as a young adult applying for Church membership. Soon afterwards, Miss Eyre accepted a proposal of marriage from a local surgeon. She would thereafter be known as Frances Machill. No wonder Margaret couldn't trace what had happened to her Jane Eyre after that first discovery!

Armed with this fortuitous new piece of evidence, Margaret returned to her research and soon traced a number of new routes whereby the name of the Fulneck girl could have come to the ears of Charlotte Brontë. Some of these routes were clerical, some were family. So numerous were the clerical connections that Margaret was able

to write a whole article about them for publication in the Brontë Society journal, *Brontë Society Transactions*.

Margaret's discovery made newspaper headlines. Her articles were repeated in magazines, on radio, and even generated a TV interview. Unfortunately, in the years since, the Moravian Jane Eyre has been forgotten about. However, new links continue to be discovered. For instance, Charlotte's father, Patrick Brontë, was educated with Jane's father, Anthony William Eyre. The two men graduated from Cambridge University in 1806.

Margaret Connor was convinced that the Moravian Jane Eyre was the source of the title for Charlotte Brontë's novel. Nothing I have found would dispute that.

Frances Jane Machill née Eyre died in July 1876, and is interred at Fulneck, grave 2035.

Kit will be giving a free talk about the Moravian Jane Eyre at Birstall Library, West Yorkshire, WF17 9EN on Tuesday 26 April at 10.30am. His talk will consider several more connections between the Eyre and Brontë families. If you have any information that supports Sr Connor's discovery, or that may be of interest to Kit, he would be very happy to receive it.

(Contact details are with the Editor). Sources available on request.

© Kit Shorten. March 2016

# What Price Lent?

## A Seasonal Misery

We all know about Lent; how in the days before mangolds and swedes were introduced in the eighteenth century, most of your livestock could not be fed over winter and had to be slaughtered after the Autumn. Consequently, the final month or so of winter was an awful time of hunger and misery. Finally, the housewife would hunt through her larder for the left-overs, the rejects from better times; that last leg of bacon from the far back corner, rejected till now because it was all fat, a few scabby apples (the odd dead mouse), the swept-up flour, anything she could lay her hands on, all thrown in the pot and cooked until edible:-

*In days of old when men were bold  
And mangolds weren't invented  
They cooked all they had in a pan with fat,  
And starvation was prevented.*

All for one last beanfeast, a final party and defiant good time, before settling down for the grinding misery and malnutrition of the last lap of winter, the feast of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday), Carnival (Goodbye Meat), Pancake Tuesday.

## Liturgical Malnutrition

The medieval Church, seemed to prefer folk to be less defiant of the fate and more meekly submissive in enduring their deprivation, and they took the seasonal misery to make a virtue of the necessity.

So the Church promoted a liturgical season of malnutrition - Lent. Lent was made forty days long, and was modelled on the forty days that Jesus spent alone in the desert, in hunger. In liturgical company with him, the people were to suffer penance along with their semi-starvation, punishment in advance for the suffering that Jesus must undergo at Easter.

## Look Away Now If You Are Nervous

Look away because here begins dissent. First I dissent from the meekness business. It may well have suited the Church to deal with a compliant and obedient population; but they would have served better to stir the people to action about their annual plight, to resent their misery, to deploy human resourcefulness and resilience to solve the problem.

Secondly I dissent on Biblical grounds, because the model of the forty days of Jesus in the desert does not make sense. That episode was at the beginning of his earthly ministry, in response to his baptism by John: his crucifixion was necessarily at the end. The one does not run into the other.

## A Better Preparation for Easter

My dissent continues with the temerity to suggest that a much better liturgical preparation for Easter, would be a liturgical journey, modelled on the actual journey that Jesus took in preparation for the end, a journey that was both geographical and revealing of his Godly nature, the journey that began with his transfiguration.

You remember that he took Peter, James, and John to that high place. 'And as he was praying the appearance of his countenance was changed, and his raiment became dazzling white' (Luke 9:29). It must have been an extraordinary experience, and certainly those three disciples saw Jesus in a new light; it even began to dawn on them just who they might be dealing with: 'The Messiah'

When Jesus asked, 'Who do they say I am?', Peter tried: 'The Christ'. They were swimming in very deep waters indeed. Then Jesus threw a spanner into the works - he decided that they must go to Jerusalem, and his men were appalled. There was nothing but trouble for them there.

## Why Jerusalem?

It had to be, Jesus knew. His transfiguration, that extraordinary visionary revelation to Peter, James, and John, had had its effect upon them, in revealing his Godly nature, and it was all well and good, but it was necessarily private.

A substantial element of the Gospel is that it is for everyone, all must have direct access. It was not meant to be mediated outwards by a few insiders, holy, special people. As John puts it: 'The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world' (John 1:9). What was needed was a public transfiguration available all, so that everyone could see that Jesus was of the nature of God, and what God in Christ was doing for them. Hence the necessity for the journey to Jerusalem, for the ensuing public confrontations, for that squalid, shameful end on the Cross. That Crucifixion was, and remains, the public transfiguration of Jesus that makes the Gospel. It is a transfiguration because one glimpse of what God was prepared to do for you must change your view of God for ever.

## Journey's End

If the Crucifixion is the transfiguration of Jesus made public, so that you can never think of God in the same way again, then it is a two-way street: one glimpse and you can never think of yourself in the same way again. God has chosen to do this for you, so it must be that you too are transfigured by the Cross. Let it be so.

John Wilkinson

# Bearing false witness

***If a person is required or authorised by law to make any statement on oath for any purpose, is lawfully sworn as a witness or as an interpreter in proceedings and wilfully makes a statement material to the case that he knows to be false, he is guilty of perjury.***

The Quakers Moravians and Separatists Act of 1838 specifically permitted those groups to affirm not swear. Now anyone can affirm.

This, on one hand, is what bearing false witness means in a court of law. On another, as we contemplate the Resurrection of Jesus, we know that it can only have happened because he was condemned to death, and that the night-time 'trial' involved the word of false witnesses, who could not agree on their accusations. 'Oh what a tangled web we weave/when first we practise to deceive.'

However, as with any breach of the commandments, the more we do it, the more practised we get. Yet telling lies about others, or merely gossiping thoughtlessly, can destroy a person's happiness, family life, work, self-respect and place in the community. Our good name, our personal honour, is written into the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Taking away someone's honour is far wider than lying there: it is taking away a good name by malice or the insidious drip of gossip.

This is what his enemies attempted to do to Jesus. No doubt, after his resurrection, after Pentecost there were people who said; 'Mud sticks.' 'There must have been something in it'.

One of the images we rarely consider for the crucifixion of Jesus is that he must have died crawling with flies. Open wounds in the hot Middle Eastern sun attract swarms, and here they lay their eggs. No wonder his friends were to seek to claim and cleanse and anoint his body for burial. False witness can stick like flies.

Beelzebub means Lord of the Flies. The New Testament also refers to Satan as the Father of Lies. How do we address this Commandment, intended to help us understand that everyone is our neighbour? It lies between the Commandment which forbids stealing (and a person's good name can be stolen, as Shakespeare reminds us several times) and the commandment against covetousness, of wanting what other people have and

going to great lengths to get it. Either way, bearing false witness is not only the large and solemn affair of a court of law but something that we meet in everyday life. It is not about the 'white lie' of social lubrication but it can be about gossip. While the former can be intended in a kindly manner, the latter can range from the thoughtless to worse.

Sometimes it's not clear what is passing on news about a congregation member who is sick and who would be glad to be in people's thoughts and prayers, and passing on reports that may be distorted or are something that the person would not want repeated.

How do we deal with this? One way is to ask the person speaking how they found out? Who is their source? It is much easier not to pass something on if there is a doubt than to try and backtrack if it has gone further. With rare and serious exceptions, if something can't be said to a person's face, the Commandment indicates it should not be said. We can try the test of 'Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?' Another might be: 'Is it for me to speak about it? If so, to whom?' If the matter is serious, as in the case of concern for a child or a vulnerable adult, there are established procedures which involve a person named to receive information which is then addressed confidentially. But in most cases which concern the assumed activities or reputation of a person, it may be best to be silent.

We can also challenge the person speaking. 'I hadn't heard that about XX. Perhaps you had better speak to XX herself'. Putting it back may give the speaker pause for thought. If we see it happening to another person, we are not innocent bystanders - we have a responsibility to act as best we can to stop it. Doing nothing, keeping silent may also be bearing false witness.

What if we are the subject of lies? It can be very painful, and there may be no way to stop it. But however angry and wounded we are, we are here called to model Christ, who was also the victim, who was also angry and wounded, but knew how to use his emotions correctly, to challenge but not to reject. Prayer is essential and we show our values, born of and reinforced by prayer, not by what is flung around about us, probably behind our backs, but by modelling Jesus as far as we are able. He knew anger, disappointment and probably shock at what went on. He kept these under rein and never lost his dignity. Jesus was a target throughout his ministry.

The 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which identified our right to personal honour was written as Europe confronted the lies that led to a war leaving millions dead, and that had spawned propaganda machines that identified some people as sub-human. We now live in a society where we are surrounded by the lies on which consumerism and its advertising industry are built, where we believe that politicians lie to us, the media lies to us, as does the internet, where 'reality shows' display little regard for human dignity, where Europe builds fences to keep out desperate people it does not want, where people drown daily trying to reach our shores and rarely make daily news, where words like 'economic migrant' are used pejoratively.

We may be less willing to see in ourselves the desire to increase our own self-importance by putting down others, or consider what harm we might be doing by acting out of turn. Nevertheless we are called to costly living out the Gospel of joy. How we respond to false witness about others, and how we deal with it when it comes our way, whether it involves international media moguls or chatter at the back of church brings the ancient requirement of the Commandments directly into our lives today - and asks us where our values are. 'Who is my neighbour', and how may my words and actions ignore, damage or assist them?

**Rosemary Power**

## From the Unity Women's Desk

**As we continue our journey, may we spend additional time each day in prayer for our world, our Moravian Church, and our own spiritual lives.**

Give thanks and highest praise to the Lord for the wonderful and productive Consultation which was held in Paramaribo, Suriname February 18-25, 2016. Give thanks for the safe travel which brought over 100 women from over 20 countries and five continents to the Consultation. We were blessed by wonderful Bible studies, presentations on the Focus Area issues, and by diligent work on the part of the delegates and observers. Our work at the UWD will go forward with much

better information and knowledge about the needs of our women around the world. Give thanks to the Lord!! Amena!!

Pray for our sisters who have returned to their respective Provinces, Mission Provinces, and Mission Areas inspired to work on the issues and resolutions that were at the Consultation. We have much work to do to be sure that our women are well served and that they will be able to be productive members of the churches where they serve.

Please pray for the following delegates and full-time observers who attended the Consultation and have covenanted to pursue the resolutions and suggestions made at the Consultation:

### Delegates:

America - Northern Province	- Sr. Marion Perrin and Sr. Mandy Mastros
America - Southern Province	- Sr. Linda Easter and Sr. Bonnie Landreth
	- Sr. Sallie Greenfield - American Region - Advisory Board
Czech Province	- Sr. Jolana Krasna and Sr. Ester Brozova
Eastern West Indies	- Sr. Dianne O'Garro and Sr. Catherine Governor
European Continental Province	- Sr. Renee Wezel and Sr. Friederike Kronbach-Haas
	- Sr. Erdmute Frank-European Region-Advisory Board
Great Britain and Ireland	- Sr. Roberta Hoey and Sr. Norma Maynard
Honduras	- Sr. Luz Alvarez
Jamaica	- Sr. Doreen Spence and Sr. Ruth Stephenson
Malawi	- Sr. Queen Manda Mhang
Nicaragua	- Sr. Cora Antonio and Sr. Delaida Wilson Kingsman
South Africa	- Sr. Lynette Fisher and Sr. Pinky Gqweta
	- Sr. Angelene Swart-Africa Region-Advisory Board
Suriname	- Sr. Tania Sanrochman-Kioe A Sen and Sr. Josefa Chin Woei Njap
	- Sr. Muriel Held-Caribbean Region-Advisory Board
Tanzania - Northern Province	- Sr. Anastazia Sikapizye
Tanzania - Western Province	- Sr. Theresia Kivanda and Sr. Rachel Lwali
Tanzania - Eastern Province	- Sr. Erica Ludela Kisinde
Tanzania - Lake Tanganyika Province	- Sr. Rachel Katala
Tanzania - Southern Province	- Sr. Tupokigwe Shibanda and Sr. Nelusigwe Silonda
Tanzania - Southwest Province	- Sr. Agness Njeyo and Sr. Beatrice Mwinuka
Zambia	- Sr. Ruth Nakamba
Burundi Mission Area	- Sr. Beatrice Ndayizeye
Czech Republic Mission Province	- Sr. Libuse Bernardova
Guyana Mission Province	- Sr. Flora Cumberbatch
Cuba Mission Area	- Sr. Alay Gonzalez
French Guiana Mission Area	- Sr. Nathalie Valpoort
Labrador Mission Province	- Sr. Sarah Jensen
Peru	- Sr. Ana Marie Huaman
Sierra Leone-Mission Area	- Sr. Safie Braima
South Asia Mission Area	- Sr. Vani Pradhan
Uganda Mission Area	- Sr. Rose Harriet Makooba

Pray too for the Observers who attended full-time at the Consultation.

Continuing the stewardship theme, Sr Patsy Holdsworth was delegated by Synod 2014 to attend the Twelfth Moravian Women's Conference in 2015, at Chesapeake Bay, Maryland, in the United States

## Moravian Women's Conference in 2015

I had heard good reports about the American Moravian women's conference from many people but had never managed to attend myself. I was delighted to hear that Minette Flemmings of Fetter Lane had been selected to attend as well. After the flight we were met at the airport and I immediately met a Moravian friend from the Netherlands and other Moravian ladies who had flown in that morning from different parts of the world.

We registered, were given our documents, room keys and our worship booklet. They were in a bag with a plastic water mug so we could hydrate ourselves. I found I was sharing with a lovely lady from Jamaica.

I was excited to meet people from different countries and make the most of my time at the conference. On the way to the auditorium were stalls from different churches and groups selling different Moravian gifts. It was lovely to talk to these Moravians, many with homemade items for sale.

After dinner we had our opening session. The keynote speaker was Rev Mary Kategile from Tanzania. Her sermon focussed on our theme for the conference; 'Walk in the Light' from Isaiah 2:5. We ended with a Lovefeast, with sticky sugar-covered buns and coffee. .

After the service we chatted with sisters from the U.S.A as well as Europe, Nepal, India, Albania and the West Indies. It was a wonderful time of fellowship. It had been a long day.

The next day began with Worship and a general session. The keynote speaker was Jennifer Sands, who had lost her husband in the twin-tower 'Nine eleven' disaster. She spoke about how she had drifted away from church in her late teens. At first after losing her husband she was depressed and angry with God, but

friends helped her and she was drawn back to church. Her story was from darkness to light, very inspiring in showing her courage and fortitude. She has written several books and is often invited to speak at events, while still working as a pharmacist.

In the afternoon I went to her workshop. She focused in more detail about pain and loss, on how we cannot always avoid the pain. She took the word 'stressed', which when spelled backwards makes 'desserts'. She put together a cake made by God the master-mixer, describing putting together raw ingredients that are not very nice, and how heat and warmth make the cake grow and rise and taste good. She asked us whether we were prepared to be dough in God's hands.

During free time I joined the choir to practice two pieces we were singing that evening. After dinner the General Session was led by The Rev. Dr. Craig Atwood who spoke on 'Listening to the Sisters: Five centuries of Women's leadership in the Moravian Church'. For centuries women played a greater role in the ministry of the Moravian Church than in any other church. He focused on Anna Nitschmann and Rebecca Protten.

On Saturday we had worship led by our Estonian sisters, and then our second general session led by Jennifer Sands. We were encouraged to walk in the light and stay close to God's word. The Bible gives us protection, correction and direction. We need to let God transform us.

My morning workshop was on 'Unnamed Women in the Bible', led by Joyce Vance, a director of Christian education in the Moravian Church for nineteen years. We focused on the woman who anointed Jesus' head, the women at the well, and the woman with the flow of blood. We then focused on healing hands, memories we had of women's hands that had brought us healing, then how our own

hands have brought healing to others.

For the second workshop I had chosen 'Lighting the way with resources Moravian -Style' run by Beth Hayes, Director of Congregation Ministries for the Moravian Church in America Southern Province. It informed us what resources are available for congregation use, and we saw the specific Moravian books and courses they had put together.

Then came choir practice for tonight's Communion and candlelight service. I was one of four people offering prayer for individuals when receiving the elements at Communion. This was led by Sr Betsy Miller who inspired us to 'Go...Let us Bear the light'. It was very emotional seeing so many Moravian women gathered sharing Communion as I prayed with people. Afterwards we were given American Moravian-style Christingle candles which we lit from each other. We were led out singing, with our candles brightening the shoreline of the conference centre with the light of Christ. We sang as the Spirit moved among us.

Uplifted and enthused by this time of fellowship we found our way to bed know tomorrow morning we would be leaving for home. Our closing Sunday session and worship was entitled, 'Go, be the light!' We broke into groups and reflected on how we had experienced the 'Light of the World' and how we had seen it in others around us at the conference. We also had a video and talk by Rev Vani Pradhan about the earthquake in Nepal and how they are rebuilding the Church. The collection was donated to Moravian work in Nepal.

It was a privilege to attend. I had a wonderful time of fellowship and a great opportunity to be fed spiritually, theologically and emotionally by others. I hope others in the future have the same opportunity for Minette and myself.

**Patsy Holdsworth**

## Studying Moravian Doctrine

*Taken from the American Moravian Magazine, we consider some issues of Moravian doctrine. In last month's issue of the Messenger, Br Craig Atwood explained some of the historical background. Here Br Mike Riess, explains the series. Further sections will appear in forthcoming issues of the Messenger.*

The Moravian Church is known (and respected) for not being doctrinal or adhering to strict dogma or rules-thus the many ideas of what it means to be Moravian-at its core, the worldwide Unitas Fratrum/Moravian Church has two important documents that spell out who we are and what we believe: *The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living* and *The Ground of the Unity*. These two statements are so important to understanding what makes Moravian Christianity unique.

**Mike Riess**, editor, *The Moravian Magazine*

### **Craig Atwood writes:**

The Moravian Church is nearly 550 years old. Our church was established in a remote village in Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic) by a small group of people who wanted to live according to their understanding of the New Testament rather than by the official teachings of the churches of their day. Despite the enormous changes in the world over the past six centuries, the Moravian Church has never lost its attitude that it is preferable to follow Christ as part of a community rather than individually or merely as a passive member of an impersonal institution. The Moravian understanding of Scripture, theology, and Christian living has always been worked out in the midst of a loving and intimate community.

It has been very important for Moravians that the members of the community of faith personally understand the teaching of the Church and participate in the ongoing formation of that teaching. We have not restricted the study and formation of doctrine to professional theologians or ordained clergy. From our earliest days we have included the entire community in the discussion of what it means to be a Christian and a member of the Moravian Church.

Our doctrinal statements are intended to help us understand the word of God in Scripture and to live according to that word. We have been reluctant to create binding doctrinal systems, preferring to let the Bible in its simplicity and rich complexity inform and shape our life as Christians. We also recognize that some portions of Scripture have greater relevance for the Christian life than others. Moravians strongly encourage all Christians to study the Bible on their own and in study groups, but we have found it helpful to have statements that guide our reading of Scripture. Such statements identify what we as a community of faith have found to be the most essential ideas in the Bible through the centuries, but they are always subject to revision as our understanding of Scripture grows.

The Moravian emphasis on simplicity, which we see in the architecture of our churches and in our music, is evident in our

doctrinal statements. However, simplicity does not mean that we are simplistic or simple-minded. Moravian doctrine, like the doctrine of all Christian churches, deals with some of the most profound mysteries of God and human existence. Different people will have different understandings of these mysteries based on their own experience, knowledge and reason. Through study and discussion, we can learn from the wisdom of our predecessors in the faith and from one another.

The study of our doctrine, therefore, is a great privilege and should be a joyful and energizing experience. We study our doctrine to enrich our lives, not to determine who does or does not belong in the Moravian Church.

Doctrinal statements provide us a way to communicate what is most precious about our community to the outside world and to new members. Our doctrinal statements help answer the frequent question, 'Who are the Moravians?' They are joyful proclamations of what God means to us and how we hope to respond to God's grace to us.

Through the centuries, the Moravian Church has produced many doctrinal statements, some of which were called confessions of faith. The church has never been without such expressions of our common faith, but it has also never seen such statements as rigid. As the world has changed and our understanding has changed, we have changed our statements of belief. Each time, though, changes were made in continuity with what had been said before and with scripture.

These doctrinal statements also help Moravians to understand ourselves and our life together as a church. They lead us into a deeper appreciation for our common values and aspirations; thus they help unite rather than divide us. Furthermore, our doctrine guides us as we make decisions so that we keep before us what our fundamental beliefs and values are. This is particularly important during times of stress and crisis.

Moravian doctrinal statements do not attempt to define the meaning of Christianity for all Christians; rather they are expressions of our understanding of being Moravian within the Body of Christ. Therefore Moravian doctrinal statements use older statements of faith that are common to other Christian churches, such as the Apostles' Creed.

Since its founding, the Moravian Church has been more concerned with right living (sometimes called Orthopraxy) more than with right belief (Orthodoxy). Theology is important, but for Moravians the practical aspects of Christianity have had priority over academic debates. This is reflected in our doctrinal statements, especially compared to other churches.



## Spotlight on University Road Moravian Church, Belfast

The Moravian congregation at University Road in Belfast began in 1830 as a Moravian society formed by Rev John Carey, minister of the Dublin congregation. The society met in King Street, the members having come from the churches at Gracehill, Kilwarlin and

Ballinderry to seek employment in Belfast. While Rev Carey's attempt to found a congregation failed, his son began a home mission which met at several locations: King Street, Taylor Street, Sandy Row, and Matilda Street. By 1887, the Congregation was settled and a new church building, in University Road, was completed and opened on 14 May of that year. This remains as our home today. A major refurbishment of the church building was completed in 2007 and in 2012, we celebrated our 125th anniversary.

At the time of writing, communicant membership stands at 67. Br Livingstone Thompson accepted a call to succeed Br Paul Holdsworth with effect from 01 September 2015. Holy Communion is celebrated on the second Sunday of the month. Special services during the year include the church anniversary which takes place on the second Sunday in May while Harvest takes place in October. The annual Christingle service is led by the Sunday School. A Lovefeast is held whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the month.'

The congregation boasts several lay preachers including Brn Charles Costley, Mark Kernohan and Derick Woods, and Sr Carol Ackah. Br Len Broadbent, who was minister of our congregation from 1984 until 2000, remains a member. Sr Carol Ackah is vice-chair of the Board of Christian Aid Ireland,

while Br Derick Woods is the voting member on behalf of the Moravian Church Irish District. University Road was a founder member of the Irish Council of Churches and remains as an active member today.

Sunday School is well-attended, with a membership of 9 young people aged from 4 months to 9 years. In Br Alastair Douglas, we are blessed with an extremely skilled organist.

The congregation has a busy diary of midweek activities. Parents and Toddlers meet on Wednesday mornings; the Moravian Women's Association meets on the first Thursday of the month; Bowls and Art and Craft Clubs meet on alternate Tuesdays, and the Garden Club meets during the summer months for visits to public and private gardens. On Thursday lunchtimes throughout the year, the church is open from 12 noon and the minister leads prayer at 1.30pm. Once a month, some members join with Fisherwick Presbyterian Church for Nightreach to provide hot drinks and snacks to those leaving the night-spots of Shaftesbury Square.

Recent social events have been a congregation outing to Delamont Country Park (the highlight of which was a ride on the miniature train followed by ice cream for children and adults alike!), a Whist drive, and a Vintage fashion show. Some of these events raised money for the current fundraising project, such as provision of a generator in a Maternity Hospital in Kenya. We fundraise for Christian Aid and Moravian concerns. A small number of Congregation members assist in the annual Christian Aid Week house to house collections. Light refreshments are served after worship on most Sundays and on the fourth Sunday of each month proceeds are dedicated to a charity of the host's choosing. In this way the congregation has generously supported numerous outside charities and our own Moravian concerns.

*Helen McVeigh*



## Eastern District training day

Eight youth and children's workers gathered at Harlesden on 27 February for a day of training and fellowship. The day included Safeguarding, thinking about what each congregation needs as procedures for various emergencies - a lost child, a fire, an intruder, a vomiting child, a leader being taken ill etc. Discussion led to draft 'What to do if' documents for Harlesden and Hornsey. Issues raised included fire assembly points, registers, cleaning up, coping with an injury, first aid kits (they should not be locked in the vestry). Do you know what to do in these situations?

Ministry with the under-fives often consists of sitting them in a room with a few toys but we explored how we can help them grow in faith and knowledge of God and of Bible stories in an age-appropriate way. Is this an area you need to re-examine?

Finally we looked at planning sessions. Unfortunately (or fortunately for the trainees?) we didn't have time to plan sessions using secular picture books as a starting point but we did get to look at what Sunday School material is available, discuss the merits of the different material, exclaim at how expensive some seems (£200 a year - but that is only £4 a week), and spent time looking through the material. Various programme books were also available to look through and the trainees went away with a variety of books and material to try out.

Thanks to Br Edwin for enabling the day and to the trainees for giving up their day to develop their ministry.

Any other district or congregation wanting a training day please get in touch.

*Joy Raynor*

## Congregation News

### Fulneck

Recent meetings of the History Society included a riveting account of the short life of Major William Booth, a Pudsey lad, ex-pupil of Fulneck School, who played cricket for Yorkshire and England and who died on the Somme in 1914. The speaker was Mr. Robin Hutton, a retired History master at the school.

Early in February the society met to be entertained by three members of the Ingham family who talked about four generations in Fulneck of the family started by William and Eliza Bramley in 1872. In March Sr. Hilary Smith presented the memoirs of three old Moravians: Priscilla Hancock, a washerwoman (among other things); Sarah Cennick (sister of John) and James Fraser, a captain of 'The Harmony', which took generations of missionaries

and their families to Labrador and back. The memoirs were accounts of these people's spiritual journeys as Christians and Moravians and were very illuminating.

On the ninth of February the Men's Fellowship enjoyed a quiz and supper in the Boys' Brigade, whilst the Women Together had a swap shop at the home of Br. and Sr. Kernahan.

A good number of people regularly came to this year's Lenten lunches. Half the proceeds go to improving the lives of people in Ethiopia, e.g. building projects, and providing wells and hospitals.

*David Ingham*

### Bedford

DEREK ARTHUR FITCH died on 15 February at the age of 85. He was the minister at Bedford St Luke's from 1984 until 1995. His time in post is remembered particularly for establishing a much-respected and successful outreach ministry to various areas of social need in the town. He welcomed many people with learning difficulties into the worshipping life of St Luke's. A local college used the Church's facilities for training them in catering. An initiative to provide breakfast for those who had spent a

night on the streets grew into BECHAR (Bedford Concern for the Homeless And Rootless), which was established as a charitable company for which Mr Fitch served as chairman of directors until 2000. Work among ex-offenders and training for new ministers also benefited from his time. Derek is fondly remembered for his vast contribution to Church and social witness in the town, proven by a congregation of some eighty people who attended his service of commemoration.

*David Bunney*

### Congregational Register

#### Deaths

**Gracehill**  
**Mary (Mollie) Spencer**  
23 January 2016

**Royton**  
**Samuel (Sam) Simpson**  
05 February 2016

**Royton**  
**Joan Wood**  
26 February

**Ockbrook**  
**Kathleen Brooks**  
05 March

**Ockbrook**  
**Connie Packer**  
15 March, age 92

## From Church House

The Provincial Board are pleased to announce that Br Scott Peddie has accepted a call to serve the Belfast, Cliftonville Congregation. Br Peddie will take up his duties on 20 March, 2016. Br Peddie is a non-stipendiary minister and was ordained into the Presbyterian Church. He is known to many in the Irish District where he has been taking services. Please keep Br Peddie and his family in your prayers.

08 April

**MWA Away Day**, Hall Green

16 April

**Sr Dixon ordination**, Salem

12 - 13 April

**PEC, BMB and Estates Property**

- The PEC

18 - 21 April

**Ministers Retreat**

## Dates to remember

William Shakespeare died on 23 April 1616, four hundred years ago. He was born 52 years earlier in the same town, Stratford-upon-Avon.

23  
Apr

## MORE MISSING VOWELS - the answers:

1. ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME
2. CHRIST IS ALIVE! LET CHRISTIANS SING
3. THE DAY OF RESURRECTION
4. GOD IS GONE UP ON HIGH
5. COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE
6. LED LIKE A LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER
7. O SPIRIT, OUR LORD GOD
8. THIS JOYFUL EASTERTIDE
9. NAME OF ALL MAJESTY
10. GOOD CHRISTIANS ALL REJOICE AND SING
11. JESUS LIVES, YOUR TERRORS NOW
12. O SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE KING
13. THE STRIFE IS OVER, THE BATTLE DONE
14. O SPIRIT OF GRACE
15. HOLY SPIRIT, WE WELCOME YOU
16. CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS
17. THERE'S A SPIRIT IN THE AIR
18. WHEN TWO FRIENDS ON EASTER DAY
19. JOIN ALL THE GLORIOUS NAMES
20. NOW THE GREEN BLADE RISETH FROM THE BURIED GRAIN

# Prayer Notes *Richard Ingham*

## Sunday 3rd [Easter 1] John 20:19-31

Risen Christ, whom nails could not hold to the cross, only love, grant us the faith that rests not on signs and wonders but on your faithfulness. So believing, may we have life in your name. Obedient to your word and trusting in your promises, may we know your peace both in our hearts and in our homes. Grant that we, who have received the fullness of your love, may be ready to bear before the world the marks of your passion. May the blessing reserved for those who have not seen and yet believe, also be ours. Walking by faith and not by sight, may we evermore rejoice in you; confessing you to be our Saviour, our Lord, and our God. Amen

## Sunday 10th [Easter 2] John 21:1-19

Jesus Lord, without whose aid we toil long, yet achieve nothing; help us both to love and obey you. As you revealed to the Apostle Peter, in his threefold vision, your infinite lovingkindness: forgive our lack of faith, widen our hearts and awaken our zeal. May we long for the salvation of all people and tirelessly strive to extend your kingdom. As you provided Peter with many excellent gifts, together with the command to feed your flock: grant that your church today may be led by faithful and true pastors. May all who follow you walk obediently according to your will; for your sake who gave yourself for the life of the world, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

## Sunday 17th [Easter 3] John 10:22-30

Christ Jesus, one with the Father, who walked in the temple at Jerusalem, guide our steps as we journey through the wilderness of this world. Lead us in your way; that we may not perish but have everlasting life. We believe and confess that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God who came into the world to save sinners, like us. Fill our hearts with such love towards you that nothing may seem too hard for us to do or to suffer in obedience to your will. May we may become daily more like you, and live more and more in the light of your presence. Amen

## Sunday 24th [Easter 4] John 13:31-35

Son of man who has given us a new commandment, that we should love one another just as you have loved us, the unworthy and wandering. Give to us your children, in all the time of our life on earth, a mind forgetful of past ill will, a pure conscience and a heart to love our brothers and sisters. Make us gentle, courteous, and patient. Direct our lives so that we may look to the good of others in word and deed. Hallow all our friendships that all people will know that we are your disciples and give glory to our ascended Lord; the Author and Finisher of our Faith; to Whom be all worship and praise, dominion and glory; now and for ever. Amen

## The Moravian Messenger

Official Journal of the Moravian Church in the British Province. Published monthly by the authority of the Provincial Synod.

**Advertisements and all communications concerning distribution and supply** should be sent to the Moravian Book Room 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TJ, and NOT to the Editor.

**Editor: Rosemary Power**  
rosemary.power@moravian.org.uk  
Messenger Editor, 2 St. Pancras Way, Derby DE1 3TH.  
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**  
Tel 01931 716703