

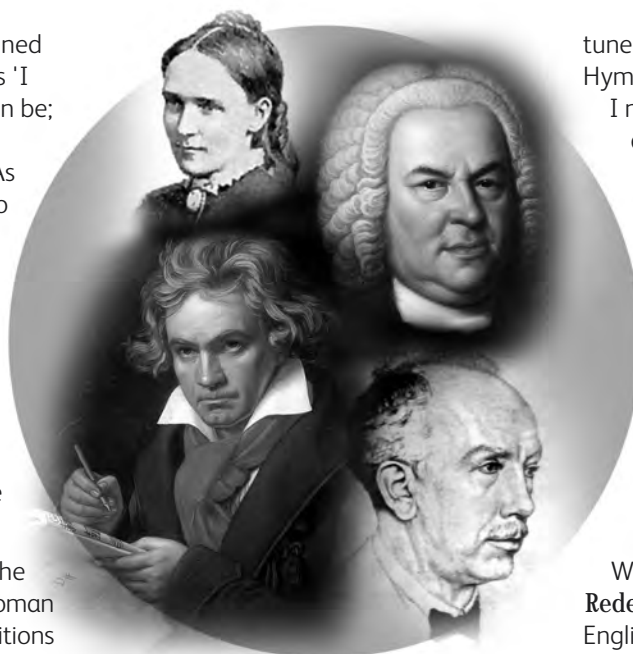


Music for Pentecost Br David Bunney writes

Those who know that I'm an ordained minister will often say at Christmas 'I expect this is your busy time'. It can be; but Holy Week makes far more demands in both time and input. As for Pentecost, the Church festival to which the Christian year leads, it's rare for it even to be acknowledged outside the inner circle of the Church. Apart from a comparatively small number of anthems specifically written for church services, there is very little in the sphere of classical music which explores the meaning of the feast.

During the sixteenth century and the peak of musical **expression** for the Roman Catholic Church, some fine compositions were realised, and it is perhaps only now that they are gaining wider acceptance. One obvious work is Palestrina's Mass **Dum complementur (And when the day .. was fully come)** which is acknowledged today for the masterpiece it surely is. The composer was active in Rome in the middle of the century, serving as a singer as well as composer at the great Roman churches of St Mary Major and St John Lateran, and later became a member of the papal choir itself for the Sistine Chapel.

In the Catholic liturgy of the time there were several Latin poems being used in the Mass, and one hymn gained a place greater than most: in fact it was called the **Golden Sequence** - so well-known did it become. It contained one major



contribution to the music of Pentecost - the medieval hymn **Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire** (thus it was translated by John Cosins, Bishop of Durham, for the 1662 **Book of Common Prayer**). It was incorporated in the service of ordination. It is eloquent and concise, and has thus found a place in most Church traditions, linked with a fine medieval tune. Similarly, one Pentecost anthem has found a certain place in many church choirs: Thomas Attwood used a different translation of the same words in a setting of classical elegance. Another ancient hymn, known in its 1867 translation by R F Littledale from the vernacular Latin of the fifteenth century, gained universal acceptance through the

tune composed for it in the English Hymnal in 1906 by Vaughan Williams - I mean of course **Come down, O love divine**. It was one of 90 hymns by Bianco di Siena (a member of a fourteenth-century religious order) discovered in 1851; this is the only one, except for Bach's four cantatas, to have gained general acceptance. The tune was named **Down Ampney** after the Gloucestershire village in which the composer was born.

Most modern hymn-books share an excellent, if small, collection of hymns for what used to be called Whitsun-tide, among them **Our blest Redeemer, ere he breathed** by the Englishwoman Harriet Auber (1773-1862). Considering that Pentecost celebrates the birth of what was to become the Church, it is given scant recognition.

There are a few examples of the idea of the descent of the Holy Spirit being adopted and given powerful expression in classical music. Beethoven was not a Christian believer, but accepted the text of the Mass as he couldn't find a greater alternative! In what for many is his very greatest work, the **Missa Solemnis**, he creates a wonderful expression of holiness in a passage between the **Sanctus and the Benedictus**. After the voices have expressed the perfunctory praise of the **Sanctus**, at the point in the Mass at which the host would be elevated, a solo violin creates an episode

continues inside



Food waste
and us

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Sr Connie Packer
1925 - 2016

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Music for Pentecost continued

representing the descent of the Holy Spirit, its descending tune having been compared to the dove in paintings. It needs to be resolved musically before the voices of the chorus speak again, coming in quietly with the word **Benedictus** (Blessed) - a truly beautiful moment in the work showing Beethoven at his most meaningful.

There's a similar transcendental moment in the third of Richard Strauss' **Four Last Songs** - the one entitled 'On Going to Sleep'; the title is deliberately ambiguous in reflecting the moment of the soul's release from this world's limitations. Again it is a solo violin that catches the beauty of the melodic line and brings the arc of sound down from its height, until

the solo soprano voice can catch it and lift it high again. The parallels between this and the descent of the Holy Spirit are obvious, and yet placed within the reach of a soul rising in love towards its ultimate experience of beauty.

The true essence of the meaning of Pentecost, described in scripture as **Tongues of Fire** descending like a 'rushing mighty wind' and touching the heads of the apostles, was best caught in a dramatic piece of organ music by Arthur Wills, composed for the organ of Ely Cathedral in 1974. The vast resources of such an instrument are used to the full to portray the frightening grandeur of the moment which also has a deep personal intensity. It seems a pity that

the Pentecostal experience has been so rarely portrayed with such startling effectiveness as this.

The sequence of Christian festivals has been given expression in so many forms. Christmas has gathered the most immediately popular, and Holy Week the deepest. Easter and Ascension-tide have both been accepted in concentrated, if specialised, pieces which are gaining broader acceptance. Pentecost, the most meaningful, which has been given such moving interpretation in many ways, remains yet the least celebrated in the world of music. Pray give it due acknowledgement in your Whitsun worship!



Food waste and us



Recently there has been a lot of coverage in the press and on the television of food waste. I have been shocked by what I have seen and the wider implications. What, as a Christian, should I be doing about it?

Almost 50% of the food thrown away in the UK comes from our homes. We are said to throw away 7 million tonnes of food and drink from our homes every year, and more than half of this we could have used.

It appears that twenty to forty per cent of fruit and vegetables produced by UK farmers for human consumption ends up wasted; either as additional animal feed, ploughed back into the land or sent to landfill, because supermarkets don't want it. Internet sources combine data from Asda, Co-operative Food, M&S, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose, which between them carry 87.3% of the UK grocery market. They reveal that, of the food thrown away in the UK each year, a great deal relates from these retailers.

But it is not all doom and gloom! In France it is now illegal for supermarkets to throw away unsold, edible food. Supermarkets have to give it to foodbanks or charities. Some pressure groups are calling for a similar law in Britain.

In this country there is an initiative encouraging us to eat 'wonky' fruit and vegetables there is nothing wrong with apart from not looking perfect. Any move which saves fruit and vegetables which are not perfect being left to rot must be a good thing.

Local to me in Bradford there are two exciting new projects which tackle the waste produced by supermarkets and wholesale markets. In Saltaire a café called 'The Canteen' uses this food to make meals for which customers pay whatever they can afford or what they feel the meal is worth. In another part of the city, 'The Storehouse' project runs a similar café but goes further by giving donated food to foodbanks and charities which regularly feed homeless and other disadvantaged groups of people.

What can we do in our own homes? A good place to start is by noting what food is going into the bin. Some people find it helps to write out a menu for the week before going to the supermarket. Only buy what you need and don't get distracted by bargains! Try to prepare and cook only

what you are going to eat; if you do have food left over, put it in the freezer for another day.

The Mission Statement for the British Province states that we commit ourselves to safeguarding the integrity of creation, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth. I suggest that by acting on the issue of food waste in our homes, by buying 'wonky' produce and supporting cafés which use surplus supermarket food, we are working towards this mission statement.

Elisabeth Hollindrake



YOUTH ZONE

Summer camp 2016

Camp is off to Northern Ireland this year, and although there will not be a trip to a theme park we still need your support to help make the camp extra-special. We will need funding for our outing, for equipment, extras and craft materials because the fee paid by the participants does not cover everything. If you or your congregation are willing to help out financially, that would be fantastic. Camp is a place where the young people grow in their faith and are encouraged to explore further in a safe atmosphere with others of their own age, something many of them do not have the chance to do at home. It helps the leaders with the planning if they know that funds are available for. This may vary from sparklers for prayers, to hoops for games, paper and paints for crafts, and whatever else the leaders come up with.

Donations by cheque payable to 'Moravian Union Inc' can be sent to Joy Raynor, 25 Lynwood Avenue, Slough, SL3 7BJ. If you prefer to make a payment by direct bank transfer e mail Joy (joy.raynor@btconnect.com) and she will send you the details.

David and the Lonely Prince



Fiona Veitch Smith,
Illustrations by Amy Warmington

SPCK have published a series of six picture books about David. This is the fourth and is about his relationship with Jonathon. Poor David feels neglected at home and is taken to the palace to play with Jonathan but can't find him until Jonathan stops hiding. The story may not be biblically accurate in the detail (did Saul really have a golden swimming pool?) but this is aimed at 3-6 year olds and tells them a little about the great King David before he was king. It also has the theme of loneliness and belonging, so there is lots to talk about. These would make a lovely gift or a useful addition to the Toddler Group book shelf.

More information can be found at <http://spckpublishing.co.uk/product/david-and-the-lonely-prince/>

ISBN 978-0-281-07458 First published in 2013 by Crafty Publishing, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Current edition published in 2015 by SPCK Cost £5.99 softback

Other titles in the series are:

David and the Hairy Beast
David and the Kingmaker
David and the Giant
David and the Grumpy King
David and the Never-ending Kingdom.

Joy Raynor

Corrections to article in the last Messenger

'Jane Eyre was a Moravian'

For West Yorkshire, read West Riding of Yorkshire

For Rev. Cyril Hall, read Rev. William Margetson Heald, Vicar of Birstall. (Rev. Cyril Hall is a fictional portrayal of traits drawn from Rev. Heald by Charlotte Brontë in Shirley).

Moravian peace witness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

The Moravian Church in the eighteenth century was quite different from the church today. Today almost anyone can join a Moravian congregation and the rules for membership are few. Modern Moravians, especially in the northern hemisphere, believe that the yoke should be easy, but 250 years ago discipline was a defining feature of the church. Whether you lived in one of the settlements or were a member of a diaspora society, you agreed to living according to the Brotherly Agreement and obey the rules of the church. One of those rules was that you did not bear arms against other people. Like Mennonites and Quakers, the Moravians endorsed non-violence as a part of the Christian lifestyle. The eighteenth century Moravians educated children to resolve their conflicts peacefully and admonished brothers and sisters not to stir up trouble in the world. Forgiveness is a Christian virtue. Revenge is a pagan value.

Moravian communities like Fulneck and Bethlehem in the United States were havens in the world. In their negotiations with the British, Prussian, and other governments, Moravians insisted that they be exempted from the duty to bear arms. One of the reasons that the first Moravian colony in America (Savannah) failed was because of hostility to Moravians who refused to bear arms against the Spanish. During the American Revolution, Moravians in the north and south had to pay heavy fines for refusing to serve in either army.

Being committed to peace does not mean that a person has to be foolish or to risk the lives of children recklessly. During the Seven Years' War (called the French and Indian War in America), August Gottlieb Spangenberg instructed the residents in how to defend the town from attack. If they saw hostile natives, they should ring the church bells so the attackers would know that they did not have the element of surprise. If that did not work, then look-outs were to fire over the heads of the attackers to show them that the Moravians were armed. If they still attacked, then the defenders should shoot at their legs to wound them, and as soon as possible, bring them into the village so that they could be nursed back to health. Under no circumstances were the defenders to kill their attackers if they could avoid doing so. Peacefulness could be costly. In 1782 an American militia in Ohio massacred 86 peaceful Moravians in a village named Gnadenhutten. The militia did allow the pastors of the congregation one night to prepare the people for martyrdom.

The eighteenth century Moravian peace witness was part of the Moravian mission to the world. Moravians in the eighteenth century were sending missionaries to many regions of the world: the Caribbean, Surinam, Egypt, South Africa, Greenland, Labrador, Russia, Lithuania, Yorkshire, Ireland, Pennsylvania, and North

Carolina. Many of these places were considered 'God-forsaken' by Europeans, but Zinzendorf spent his fortune trying to realize Comenius' vision of a world united in peace. It was essential to the Moravian mission that the church be separated completely from the violence of European colonialism and exploitation. The message of Christ's redemption had to be divorced from fear.

The Moravian commitment to the human rights of native peoples and slaves was costly. Moravian missionaries were imprisoned on St. Thomas for telling slaves that they were human beings for whom the Creator suffered on the cross to rescue them from death. Moravians were helpless to prevent the Trail of Tears, but they sent missionaries to be with the Cherokee in Oklahoma. One of the reasons that the Moravian Church in the United States did not grow was because it was so closely associated with respect for black people and Indians in a nation that was intent upon expansion.

Times change. The young forget the lessons of their elders and seek to live like their neighbours. Gradually the Moravians in America grew weary of standing against the values of the world, and they stopped calling one another 'brother' and 'sister'. Moravians in many colonies and countries began to own slaves. Missions to other lands died down for many decades. And in those years the United States moved toward the epic tragedy some call the Civil War. In the 1830s the Moravians in Salem formed a militia that had drills in the town square. Although most Moravians in North Carolina were pro-Union until 1861, they joined the Confederate cause once North Carolina seceded, and they sent a regiment to fight for the rights of slaveholders. It was the first time in history that a regiment of Moravians were sent off to battle with the blessings of the pastor and cheers of the women. The tragedy of the Moravian Church's movement away from pacifism was that the first conflict in which Moravians were allowed to participate in was one where there were Moravians on opposing sides. Nazareth Hall, the Moravian boarding school for boys, was converted into a military academy in 1862. Over a score of the students died in the war. Five former students became generals in the Federal army and three in the Confederate Army. As Abraham Lincoln once said of that horrifying waste of human life, both sides prayed to the same God, but God could not be on both sides. Perhaps he was on neither side. What is clear is that the Moravian Church had abandoned its four-hundred year old commitment to non-violence.

Craig Atwood

The Prayer Watch in history

The seventeenth-century Pietist movement which gave birth to the (renewed) Moravian Church emphasised personal religious experience and practice over the liturgy and sacraments of the Lutheran Church. Both personal prayer and independent prayer groups were an important part of the movement. The emergence of prayer vigils in the renewed Moravian Church is not therefore a surprising development.

Following the Holy Communion celebration of 13 August 1727, an event which continues to hold an important place in the Moravian calendar, a group of brethren and sisters at Herrnhut began a 24-hour-a-day Prayer Watch. The journal for 22 August of that year reads: 'At this time we all feel how necessary it is for the church, although still in its infancy, to be continually watching out for its old enemy Satan, who sleeps neither day nor night, and to have in its infancy sentinels, as it were, always on guard.' A later entry tells us: '24 brethren and the same number of sisters, divided among them by lot the 24 hours agreeing to retire to their chambers for secret prayer and to lay before the Lord in detail and with entire simplicity all the troubles and wants, internal and external, which had come to their notice'. As the practice continued it was agreed that those who could not spend the entire hour in prayer could spend part of it in praise or singing. A weekly meeting decided the causes for which the prayers should be made. The system was wholly voluntary.

Over time the system was introduced wherever congregations were established. If sufficient volunteers could not be found, a willing individual would extend his or her hours to cover any gaps. There was no restriction on the subject of prayers. They might be for the Church, named individuals or the human race in general.

With the passing of time the various communities which had introduced the Prayer Watch found it increasingly difficult to find sufficient volunteers to cover each 24-hour period. The neglect by some congregations had already been raised

in the 1769 Synod. In 1801 the number of willing participants had so reduced that the Synod decided to select participants by lot held at three monthly intervals.

Placing this obligation on unwilling parties had mixed results and the 1825 Synod decided to remove the obligation of a Prayer Watch from congregations. Some congregations may have continued the practice but over time it died out entirely.

Something rather similar to the Prayer Watch was inaugurated by the British Province when the British Moravian Almanack for 1872 suggested, with its usual list of daily prayer topics, the setting up of a Moravian Prayer Union. This was followed up by a detailed letter in the **Messenger**: a formal agreement could be made among members of such a union to use, day by day through the week, either at morning or evening family prayer, the topics suggested in the Almanack as subjects of intercession. The Union did not make the round-the-clock demands of the old Prayer Watch. Members were to put forward their names and the time of their prayers. These would be available to other members and it was hoped that 'by the knowledge and name of those who are engaged in the same sacred exercise at the same hour the fact of our brotherhood and our fellowship in Christ will be more fully and practically realised'. Efforts were made to integrate the British Union with similar prayer arrangements elsewhere in the Moravian world. The idea was to 'create a new band of true union and spiritual brotherhood to further the united spiritual interests of the Church'.

Additional topics for prayer were published in the **Messenger** for specific times: prayers for Synod, for example, or during wartime. The First World War saw prayers suggested for the wounded, the threatened unity of the Church, peace and a renunciation of war. This revived practice spread to congregations outside Britain.

In 1957 sisters in the Herrnhut congregation proposed reviving the

Prayer Watch for the world-wide Church. Not only was this the five-hundredth anniversary of the old United Brethren but it was also the height of the Cold War and Herrnhut, deep in East Germany, must have felt especially isolated from congregations the other side of the Iron Curtain. No doubt a practice that could be shared by all Moravian churches was seen as reducing that sense of isolation. The suggestion was adopted and based on the original 24-hour Prayer Watch. The month of June was given to the British Province. The allocation of hours was based on congregation numbers. Thus Fulneck was given from 6pm on 02 June to 10pm on 04 June, while Kimbolton, Pertenhall and Riseley had 4am to 11am on 18 June. The 24-hour Watch was to take place within the church with the recommendation that local police should be notified where lights were on throughout the night. Hymns, readings and subjects of prayer were provided for each hour. Within the allocated 24 hours were 5 hours of common worship: midnight to 1am, 6-7am, 10-11am, 3-4pm and 8-9 pm. At these times the minister was expected to be present and to conduct services with hymns, prayers and an address. No fewer than three persons were to be present for each hour. The experiment was deemed a great success. It was certainly an astonishing achievement. The decision was made to continue the Watch in later years. The requirement that the Watch should take place in the church or chapel and the requirement for periods of common worship no longer applies.

Times change and I imagine fewer people today would think of the Prayer Watch as a guard against Satan but rather as providing, as in the later Watches, a sense of unity. The world-wide Moravian Church differs from country to country in practice, style of worship and theological understanding, but the Prayer Watch, shared throughout the Unity, provides a valuable sign that all are part of the one united Church.

Adrian Wilsdon

With thanks to Lorraine Parsons, archivist.

A focus on prayer

The word 'prayer' is a general term for all aspects of our conscious relationship with God. It covers liturgical worship, meditation and individual prayer, as well as fasting and almsgiving. This fellowship with God can be either spoken out loud or an unspoken mental communication. The different traditional aspects of prayer are:

1. Adoration, which celebrates the qualities of God experienced by the believer, such as love, goodness, graciousness, mercy, bountifulness, truth, beauty and faithfulness.

2. Praise is the outward expression of the worship of believers, not just focussed on God himself, but on his mighty acts in nature and history. This joins the individual today as well as the present worshipping communities to the whole company of believers throughout the ages - what an overwhelming concept that is!

3. Thanksgiving gives an opportunity for the individual and the community to offer grateful thanks to God for their personal experiences of what God has done for them.

4. Confession, where believers acknowledge their sins, express sorrow for them and seek forgiveness, together with a promise to 'amend our sinful lives'.

5. Petition or supplication is the most common form of prayer, where the believer asks God for something which is desired. This is regarded as 'the lowest form of prayer' because in it we often ask God to satisfy our own selfish longings or interests, sometimes against those of other people. A great difficulty with this is how to deal with the outcome of seemingly 'unanswered prayer'.

6. Intercessions have a prominent place in Christian liturgical worship, which was inherited from the Jewish tradition. They are associated with petition, but are usually for others or for mainly spiritual aspects of a believer's personal life.

Most of the examples of prayers in the Old Testament are found in the Psalms and the Prophets. The psalms contain individual prayers of the psalmists, communal prayers of the pilgrims on their way to the Temple in Jerusalem, as well as liturgical temple prayers. A number of them begin with the words 'Praise the

Lord!' or 'O give thanks to the Lord'. Others celebrate the goodness and bounty of God and the wonder of his creation. In many of them the psalmists pour out their personal problems and plead for God's help, as they often feel he has forgotten them. This great outpouring restores their relationship with God, and such psalms usually end on a note of hope, reconciliation and praise. The prophets were representatives of the people before God in prayer; they were intercessors for the people as well as spokespersons for God. They felt a great responsibility for the people and nation, and so interceded on their behalf when they seemed to be under threat, for example in times of war or expected invasions.

In the New Testament the synoptic Gospels give a number of examples of Jesus praying on his own as well as taking a small group of disciples to pray with him. This leads the disciples to ask Jesus to teach them how to pray, and in response he gives the example of the Lord's Prayer¹. He emphasises that our prayers should be persistent² and suggests that in our petitions we should be asking for the power of the Holy Spirit to come into our lives³. He is shown to be overwhelmed by the spiritual needs of the people who come to him for help, which leads him to say pointedly to his disciples that they need to pray for 'labourers' to come forward to help in this task⁴. Jesus also speaks of the effectiveness of believing prayer⁵. There are very few examples of what Jesus actually prayed for, but I have identified three, all of which follow the Last Supper. Jesus tells Simon Peter that he has prayed for him, that his faith will not fail and he will be restored to strengthen his fellow disciples⁶. In the high priestly prayer⁷ Jesus prays for his followers, that they may be protected, sanctified and 'be one' in the task they have been given, and he adds: I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. In the Garden of Gethsemane we find a key to the problem of seemingly unanswered prayer, where Jesus prays to God to release him from his coming ordeal, but adds the caveat not what I want, but what you want⁸.

Immediately after the ascension we find the believers together at prayer⁹, as also

before choosing the replacement for Judas amongst the apostles¹⁰ and after their experience on the Day of Pentecost¹¹. There is a very powerful prayer for boldness to carry on God's work following the arrest and release of Peter and John, after which the power of the Holy Spirit was again experienced¹². Numerous other times of prayer are noted throughout Acts, all related to the work and mission of the church. Then after Paul begins his missionary journeys around the Roman world he follows up his visits with letters, in which he thanks God for these new groups of Christian believers. He tells them of his prayer for the salvation of his own people¹³, and that he and others are praying for the continued building up of the faith and love for God in these isolated congregations around the Gentile world¹⁴.

Although all these prayers relate solely to the faith and mission of the community of believers, and this was obviously a primary focus of their prayer time, I feel prayers of intercession would also have covered other matters, such as the poor, needy, sick and troubled, as these were part and parcel of Jesus' ministry as well as that of the early Church, and prayers may have also included national issues as these were troubled times under Roman occupation.

The concerns covered by our Moravian liturgies cover: God's sovereignty in the world, the church, the church's mission, leaders of the nations, national life, everyday life, daily blessings, those in need and in trouble, the sick, those who mourn, as well as personal requests for a reverent spirit, forgiveness, strength from above and care for family and friends. These offer a good guide for those preparing the more free and flexible forms of intercession used in many services and church meetings today, as well as for the individual believer's personal prayer life.

In the past, prayer time meant a temporary, or sometimes permanent, withdrawal from the world and the daily concerns of life, in order to be able to focus totally upon God either as an individual alone with his/her Maker, or together with others in a community of believers. However, in recent years there has been a movement towards

discovering the presence of God within our daily lives, when short appropriate prayers are offered 'on the spot' as it were, perhaps in the middle of washing up, or during the radio or television news, or out in a beauty spot in the country. Individuals and groups of Christians have also taken to prayer walks around their communities, praying for those who live in the streets they pass through as well as for the businesses, schools, sports centres and other concerns in the area they visit.

In our action-packed, fast-moving world, it seems to be much more difficult to quieten our minds and bodies for this important time of prayer fellowship with God, not only for us to communicate with God, but also for us to listen to God speaking to us. We are also bombarded daily in our living rooms with news of atrocious happenings around the world as well as in our neighbourhood, and sometimes these issues can take over our prayer time. In our technological, individualistic society we also seem to have forgotten that in all our prayers and activities we should be aligning our wills to God's will and not the other way round, and that sometimes God says 'No' as he had to do to his only Son in the Garden of Gethsemane. With the decline in church life in the western world and within our own Moravian congregations, intercessory prayers for the building up of the faith of the church and the individual believers within it are of vital importance for its continuance and mission.

Hilary Smith

Bible References:

1. Luke 11 and Matthew 6
2. Luke 11:8 and 18:1
3. Luke 11:13
4. Matthew 9:35-38
5. Matthew 13:19-20, Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-29 and John 14:11-14
6. Luke 22:31-32
7. John 17:1-26
8. Mark 14:36 and Matthew 26:39
9. Acts 1:12
10. Acts 1:24
11. Acts 2:43
12. Acts 4:23-31
13. Romans 10:1-2
14. Colossians 1:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-10, Philippians 1:9-11

A Present Fire

Not for us the singed heads
with uptumed faces
seen in arenas where apostles
congregated.

In more familiar places
we have awaited
our baptism of fire.

In inner city flats
up concrete stairways,
in neat suburban semis
by rolling fairways,
in banks and stores
on foundry floors,
in launderettes
and Special Schools,
on broad-lawned campuses
and in the typing pools
we have heard the singing
of high hopes.

Not in a hurricane of tongues
comes
our illusive revelation
heaven riven:

for the most part quietly,
yet valid still,
the present fire is given.

Margaret Connor

A Song At Midnight

"About midnight
Paul and Silas
were praying and
singing hymns to
God, and the
other prisoners
were listening to
them." Acts 16.25

Light from Heaven, Light of Life,
shine within my soul;
light with peace all inner strife;
calm me; make me whole.
Lord, my helplessness I bring;
lift me in your love;
in the darkness let me sing
Praise to You above.

Ever present Help in Need,
Guardian of my days:
From my fear and worries freed,
hear my midnight praise.
Rescued by Your saving power,
fetters cast aside;
Light upon my darkest hour;
Lord, with me abide.

Music: "Gwalchmai" (JD Jones). Words: Paul Gubi. 2016

6 The Ten Commandments

You shall not kill

Life is sacred! This commandment encourages us to recognise what it means to be created in the image of God. This commandment is about committing murder. The Old Testament had three understandings of murder; self-defence, accidental, and deliberate. It is murder which is at the heart of this commandment.

After the flood, Noah, is told by God 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image' (Genesis 9:6). Therefore, when homicide was committed personally and with intent to harm, the killer was a murderer and consequently, must be put to death. The violence which had corrupted the earth to the times of the flood is now being restrained by a very old law against murder. Underpinning this is the authenticity of humans created in the image of God! This relates to the law given to Noah, binding not only on Israel but on the Church.

Looking at our present world we still have not truly grasped the value of life. We have failed to recognise that life is a gift to be cherished and lived responsibly with compassion. Yet we can be thankful for those today that recognise that we are our brothers' and sisters' keeper. 'You shall not murder' invites us to recognise our interconnectedness with all humanity. It encourages us to acknowledge that to murder another is in essence is to kill ourselves. If we believe, as I do, that we are created in the image of God, to murder another is to maim that image. For by taking the life of another we devalue our own. We can, therefore, understand why we are commanded not to commit murder. As we look on our broken and divided world it is clear to see the agony and discord that the taking of lives brings to communities and countries.

Murder is often motivated by hatred, prejudice and unrealistic preconceptions. Our creation in the image of God calls us to a life of love for God and our fellow men and women. Underpinning the command not to commit murder is the invitation to work towards a society in which the tremendous

love of the Creator is powerfully reflected in the lives of the created. Why? To empower us in challenging times to work with the tensions in life with faith and a reconciling heart. Love empowers us to grasp the sacredness of life. Murder creates disharmony and interferes with the holistic balance of life.

The taking of life affects us all deeply as we read of it in our newspapers or listen to it on our televisions. We are often moved to tears by the senseless killings of innocent individuals in our world. We recognise the unnaturalness of murder. We are disturbed because we know that no real good comes out of such a loveless action. Jesus invites us to love our enemies because he was well aware that the fruits of love are tremendous. Love brings light into the darkest places, hope into the shadows and faith to swim over the storms. Love creates the possibility for relationships to grow and develop, for reconciliation to be realised, for new dawns to spring up into hearts hardened with thoughts of hatred or murder. Murder is destructive and divisive; it solves nothing but creates further disharmony and heartbreak wherever it is committed. It is not difficult to understand why we are commanded not to kill. The spiritual, emotional and psychological impact on society is extremely damaging.

We are beautifully created by a loving and all powerful God, who invites us to lovingly accept our common humanity with compassion, generosity and a forgiving heart.

Hopefully, before long we will all hear, respond and listen to God's command: 'You shall not kill'. In hearing, responding and listening we will be empowered by his Spirit to respect the lives of those around us as if they were our own, because we highly value God's image. May the world hear the call of God to love the whole created order with hearts determined to bring peace out of adversity, hope out of despair, and love out of hatred. For the commandment not to kill comes out of God's love for the world.

Gloria David

The Commandments Series

The following refers to the issues of the Messenger where these articles are found.

1. 'The First Commandment', Beth Torkington. March 2016, 25-6 (lead article).
2. 'Do not make a graven image of God', Patsy Holdsworth. September 2015, 100.
3. 'The Third Commandment', Simon Taylor. January 2016, 16.
4. 'The Law on Sunday', Paul Mitchell. August 2015, 88.
5. 'Honour your father and your mother...', Michael Newman. December 2015, 140.
6. 'You shall not kill', Gloria David. May 2016, 56.
7. 'The Seventh Commandment' John Wilkinson. January 2016, 5.
8. 'Thou shalt not Steal', David Bunney. November 2015, 125.
9. 'Bearing false witness', Rosemary Power. April 2016, 42-3.
10. 'Wanting what you shouldn't have', Richard Ingham. July 2015, 76.

A Moral Dilemma

- the death penalty

Many people know that for the last twenty-five years or so, I have worked with an organisation called Lifelines - an organisation which is totally opposed to the death penalty - and which finds pen-friends for the men and women on death row in America.

My long-time penfriend, Daniel, was executed by the State of Arizona just over three years ago, and having been asked by the editor to write about the death penalty, I felt that I should write about our last few months with Daniel. It has been a painful and distressing journey for me, and for John, my husband, also, but one that I feel privileged to have experienced. It has brought me friends that are incredibly dear to me, and taught me so much about forgiveness, betrayal, compassion, loving kindness, and cruelty on all sides.

When Daniel had spent 25 years on the Arizona death row, we knew that he was coming close to being given a date for his execution. Most prisoners are given a team of workers from the Federal Public Defenders Office at the beginning of the 'habeas' case. These are usually dedicated legal representatives, attorneys, investigators, psychiatrists, field workers, who assist their client through the last traumatic years of their lives, Daniel's case was slightly different, in that for various reasons, the Federal Public Defenders' Office was not able to represent him until 2009. In 2010 therefore, the legal team contacted me and suggested that if I wanted to see Daniel again, it would be better to go soon, as he was to be given an execution date in November 2010. John and I decided to visit him that month, and having informed the team that we would be in Arizona in November, we were asked if we would be willing to speak for Daniel at his clemency hearing. So we met up with Investigator, Andrew, and attorney, Robin, two lovely Americans, dedicated to helping Daniel as much as they could. It was at this point in Daniel's life that his early childhood was investigated for the first time, which brought to light the fact that he had been tortured and abused from a very early age by his immediate and extended family, and that he was then taken into care, where the abuse continued. The crime for which Daniel was convicted, in which he tortured his victims, mirrored the abuse that he had received from his own family. Interestingly the lawyer who initially prosecuted Daniel, had also presented at his clemency hearing, and said that if he had been given the facts of Daniel's childhood abuse, he would never have sought a death sentence. Daniel's crime was so dreadful that he had

buried it deep inside him, and for him, in the last few years of his life, to have to confront his actions, and accept responsibility for them, was traumatic in the extreme - but it needed to happen, and he faced it bravely.

I think only death row prisoners know to the minute, when their deaths will occur. After 25 years of working with these men and women, I find it as shocking and obscene now as I did when I first came across the system, that human beings can put another human being to death in the cold and calculating way in which the American death penalty is administered. To walk alongside a friend, who has to travel this road, is distressing in the extreme. John and I made, with the help of Robin and Andrew, a video to be presented at Daniel's clemency hearing, held just a short time before his execution date, and in the video we were able to talk of our years of friendship, of our understanding that Daniel had the ability to be a useful member of the prison population, and that if granted Life without Parole, he could do much through his feelings of remorse, to atone for the pain and distress that he had caused his victims, and his victims' families. But clemency was denied, and Daniel's sentence upheld. He came within 18 hours of being executed, in April 2011, had his sentence put on hold for over another year whilst the courts argued points of law, and was finally executed in August 2012. Daniel's attorney, who came to respect and cherish the Daniel behind the crime, and who walked with him from the death cell to the execution chamber, and sat in the observers' gallery so that Daniel would see a compassionate face as he was dying, is now a close and special friend of ours. America should be proud of her, and the others like her, who fight for justice and compassion and understanding - instead she, and her kind, are reviled and receive hate mail and death threats. But for the Daniels of this world, Robin is a lifeline and a light in a world of darkness and cruelty.

I am so glad for the experience of walking with Daniel, and others like him, and for being able to find in amongst the cruelty and distress of a death row, times of fun and laughter and close friendships, another world to mine, but a world that sadly, exists.

I am grateful too to have this opportunity to thank, from the bottom of my heart, those who have stood with me throughout these years, my lovely family, church friends and Lifeliners, and our dedicated Moravian Continental Bishops, who have travelled with me, and with Daniel, with kindness, and understanding, on this incredible journey.

Beth McOwat

The visit of Bishop Joachim Kreusel and Br Thsespal Z Kundan, for the Ordination of Brother Ebenezer Gangmei and to celebrate the Ministry of the Moravian Church Binnakandi

The Congregation and the entire village witnessed a great blessing when we saw Br Ebenezer being ordained as Deacon in the Moravian Church.

This is how it went.

Day 1: Thursday 10 April.

Brother Amon and Ebenezer went to pick up the Bishop and Brother Thsespal.

8:30 p.m - 11.00 p.m. Dinner and Discussion. Brother Kreusel was confused who were Brother Kabui and Brother Kagauchung Rongmei Naga.

Day 2: Friday

Br Kreusel, Br Thsespal and Br Ebenezer visited the Moravian Institute Binnakandi branch and met the children and teachers. The day gave time to prepare the ordination service in Rongmei, the native language. It was fortunate that Br Ebenezer could translate the ordinal with the help Br Rapanlung and Br Reuben Kamei. Then Brother Kreusel visited the small village's market with Br Ebenezer, and walked through the paddy field. We had time to share more about the ministry in Delhi and also in Binnakandi. We believe Br Kreusel did get a little clearer about the community of people living in Assam and especially the congregation.

Day 3: Saturday

The Ordination Day 12 April Saturday, 2016.

At 10 am the Ordination started with an introduction by Rev Kagauchung R Naga to the congregation members and guests. Then the leadership was handed over to Bishop Joachim Kreusel. Br Thsespal Z. Kundan was delegated by the British Mission Board of the Moravian Church. There were two Bible presentations, from Binnakandi Moravian Church by Br Kamujei Gengmei and from Delhi Moravian Fellowship by Br Thsespal.

The whole liturgy was not only printed but there was also a running translation by Br Reuben Kamei.

The Sermon by the Bishop was based on the text of Matthew 14: 22-33: Jesus walks on the water. The sermon was an



Br Kreusel's first visit to Binnakandi, he was very happy and encouraged to see the women's work. Br Kundan also thanked the congregation with encouraging words.

encouragement for the congregation and a reminder that the Church is send by Jesus into the world (into the sea). Problems and persecution may come in life but Jesus will soon join us and walk with us. He wants us to have faith in him and continue to call on his name as Peter did.

12 noon The Ordination service was completed with beautiful refreshments served by Binnakandi Congregation. The ministers and Br Amon were able to visit Br Neihlalung K Gengmei, a minister of the Baptist Church, who was Br Ebenezer's mentor during his Theological training.

At 4 pm Br Kreusel visited nearby villages and the surrounding area.

Day 4: Sunday

At the 8.30 am Morning Worship service. The preaching was given by the newly ordained pastor, Rev Ebenezer. He was also given the opportunity to take part in leading the Holy Communion with other ministers.

At 8.00 pm the Moravian Women Society came and thanked Br Kreusel and Br Kundan, and gave gifts of a traditional (Rongmei) shawl and a Scarf. As it was



We had an early dinner and bedtime as the next day both Br Kreusel and Br Thsespal had to take the early morning flight.

Day 5: Monday

At 5.30 am Br Amon drove Br Kreusel and Br Thsespal to the airport with Br Ebenezer.

Visits from British Mission Board to South Asia, especially Assam, have been a blessing to all the congregation members. Hot and humid weather, along with regular power cuts, can frustrate the visitors and congregations, but we experience our spiritual reunion more warmly when we meet you often. Thank you for remembering us and also thinking about us.

As we continue to serve the Lord in Spirit and our might.

Continue to remember us with your prayer.

With regards

Br Kagauchung R Naga
Pastor of Moravian Church Binnakandi Assam (South Asia)

More to follow in the June Messenger - Editor

Although Sr Connie Packer, who died on 15 March at the age of 92, was, for many years, a member and servant of the Moravian Church, her earliest years were spent in the Guide Bridge Congregational Church. Her contact with the Moravian Church began when Ivor Packer, training at the nearby Fairfield Moravian College, took a service at Connie's church and visited the Flowers' home for a meal.

The relationship between Connie and Ivor quickly developed and they married just before Ivor answered a Call to serve the Moravian Church in St. Kitts in the Caribbean. Travelling was difficult in the years just after the War. Connie had to wait until a passage was available and when she did eventually reach St Kitts she was sent on to Antigua where Ivor had gone to a Synod, only to find that he was desperately ill with typhoid fever and not expected to survive. Connie also became ill with inoculation fever and dysentery, and they were in the same ward together.

They did eventually recover and returned to St Kitts but Connie became ill again and had to stay behind when Ivor was called to Trinidad. She was cared for by friends until she could follow.

Wendy was born in 1948 but their ministry continued to be troubled by sickness and in 1952 Connie had to be



Sr Connie Packer
1925 - 2016

flown back to England when pregnant and extremely ill with dysentery. Thankfully, she did get better and Sharon was born safely.

Ivor returned to England and they accepted a Call to Bath, Coronation Avenue. The family were at last together. In 1958 they moved to Westwood where they spent eight happy years, Connie, as always, taking on many responsibilities in church life. While there, a third child, Anita, was born in 1960, and Connie's

mother came to live with them after suffering a stroke.

1966 saw a move to Ockbrook with Leicester but once again sickness intervened. Ivor's health broke down in 1973 and they moved to Priors Marston to help him recuperate. Connie again took on many congregation responsibilities as well as caring for two invalids. They moved briefly to Malmesbury and then in 1975 to University Road. His health continued to deteriorate and he died in 1976 at the age of 57. Following Ivor's death, Connie applied for the Moravian Ministry 'to continue the work he had begun'. She was called to serve as student minister at Wheler Street and Moss Side, was ordained Deacon in 1978, and as the first woman Presbyterian in 1984, by which time she had been called to Bedford, Queen's Park.

Connie retired in 1987, first to Fairfield and then to Ockbrook, declaring she would never move again. The final years were difficult but the dogged determination and deep faith which had always been with her sustained her to the end. She is remembered with affection and respect by so many whose lives she touched.

Fred Linyard

Congregation News

Baildon

It is some months since Sr, Gloria retired and we are very grateful for all she did to help us through a difficult period. For the first time in our history, we have found ourselves without a resident minister. It's been a steep learning curve and we are lucky that Brs Michael Newman and James Woolford are taking Sacramental and Youth services. Our



Spring at Baildon

On the fourth Saturday of the month Baildon village has a Farmers' Market and we open our Hall for hot and cold drinks

thanks go to Church Committee, to Sr Ruth France who regularly keeps our worship services, and to the other dedicated Lay Preachers in the Yorkshire District. It is up to every member to support them all in whatever way we can!

All the Christmas Services were well attended, which was a huge boost to us. Our youth section continues to thrive with Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides all very active and with waiting lists. Our thanks must go to their faithful leaders.



Baildon MWA

to warm shoppers up, with delicious bacon butties and toasted teacakes, or cool them down. Our running book stall is open with the craft and bric-a-brac tables set out, temptingly stocked with anything that might sell. 'Pre-loved clothes' is an imaginative description of 'Good as new', and it's a common sight to see a friend walking through the village in another friend's coat! We have attracted a regular clientele and it's become a popular meeting place.

A very positive aspect of life in Baildon is the cooperation between the different denominations. There have been shared groups over Christmas and Lent studying Celtic Spirituality and the Psalms.

We have no idea what the future holds for us but pray that we can keep going with love and good humour, serve our community and be good witnesses, right where we are, to our faith.

Libby Mitchell

Congregational Register

Baptism

Gracehill

Oscar Robert Kenneth Morrison
13 March

Received into membership

Gomersal

Chris and Karen Norris
20 March

Death

Annie Alexandra (Hazel) McKee
08 March, aged 79

From Church House

03 - 04 May

PEC, BMB and Estates Property meetings - Church House

11 May

World Mission Committee

14 May

PYCC - Yorkshire

Dates to remember

5

May

Ascension Day

15

May

Pentecost

22

May

Trinity Sunday

15

May

21

May

Christian Aid Week

www.christianaid.org.uk

Prayer Notes

Richard Ingham

Sunday 1st [Easter 5] John 5:1 - 9

Healer of the sick, Helper of the helpless and Saviour of the lost, who went about doing good, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people: send down your blessing on all who labour to alleviate suffering. Teach and guide all whom you have called to be sharers in your own work of healing; that the pain and grief of the world may be lightened, and the boundaries of your Kingdom enlarged. Grant us to walk with you in newness of life and daily grow more like you; our Saviour and our Lord. Amen

Thursday 5th [Ascension Day] Luke 24:44-53

Ascended Lord, who has gone beyond the horizons which our eyes can see and further than the limits which our minds can reach. Higher than high and further than our most perceptive thoughts, you reign, celestial and supreme. Thank you for this mysterious day in the life of the Apostles which saw them gazing heavenwards in confusion yet departing in joy as they saw you rise above the limitations of the world, to sit forever at the right hand of God. Broaden our vision, enlarge our understanding, widen our perspectives, and deepen our faith - that we may catch our breath in awe as we celebrate your exaltation, rejoice in your triumph and proclaim your glory. Amen.

Sunday 8th [Easter 6] John 17:20-26

Son of Man, who entered our mortal life to be one with us in our humanity: we thank you for the love which stooped down to the level of our need and for the glorious hope of our salvation which is in one who is both God and man. As you prayed for your disciples that they might be one, even as you are one with the Father: draw us to yourself, so that in love and obedience to you we may be united to one another. Break down the walls of division and frustrate the enemies of peace. Grant that your Church, having one Foundation and one Head, may indeed be one Body, holding one faith, proclaiming one truth, and following one Lord in holiness and love. Amen

Sunday 15th [Pentecost] John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Spirit of the living God, holy and good, fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle within us the fire of your love. On the day of Pentecost you came to the church as the gift of the exalted Lord. Bless us when we are all together in one place, and grant that in our common life we may know your coming. May your fire rest upon each of us, and then make us, separately and together, preachers of your good news whom all the world shall hear and understand. Amen

Sunday 22nd [Trinity Sunday] John 16:12-15

Lord, God Almighty, Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the mysteries of whose being are unsearchable: accept our praises for the revelation which you have made of yourself Father, Son and Holy Spirit; three Persons and one God and grant that ever holding fast this faith, we may magnify your glorious name, for ever and ever. Amen

Sunday 29th [Trinity 1] Luke 7:1-10

Lord we are not worthy of the least of all the mercies, which you have shown to us your servants our whole lives long to this very day. Even less are we worthy that you should come under our roof. Open the door of our hearts. Give us such faith in you that, along with all the things that are beyond our understanding, we may believe that you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and to give more than we deserve. Forgive us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and give us those things which we are not worthy to ask. Amen

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