



Synod Preview

Each Synod has its own particular theme and this forthcoming Synod will be no different because two long standing members of our Provincial Board are retiring and we need to elect two new members to guide us through the next two years. Across the world people have been asked to pray for our Synod and here in the British Province we should be able to do the same and lift up informed prayer for the work of Synod and the direction of the Church.



© Br John Carey

This year from Friday 6th to Monday afternoon on the 9th July ministers, deputies and ex-officio members of Synod will come together at the Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick to reflect on the past two years and to plan for the future of the Church. To do this they will hear reports of the work undertaken by the provincial Church Committees including the Provincial Board, debate proposals and elect people to various positions.

What does all this mean in practice and how will it be structured for this particular Synod? Synod will begin with the Opening Service where the preacher will be Rev Dr Jørgen Bøytler, the Unity Administrator and minister of Christiansfeld Moravian Church. This opening sermon very often sets the tone for the whole Synod and Br Bøytler is aware of all the issues in the worldwide Moravian Church. Following afternoon tea, Synod is formally opened by the Chair of the Provincial Board and the election of President and Deputy President of Synod takes place.

The Chaining Panel, Br Paul Holdsworth and Br Michael Newman will then take their places as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson and the business of Synod begins.

The first item of business on the Friday evening is a proposal to elect a Bishop at this Synod. If Synod agrees this then the election of the new Bishop will take place first thing on Sunday morning. The second item of business is several proposals that if passed will change the composition of the Provincial Board from four members to six members. Again if this is passed then these elections will take place on the Sunday Morning. If time permits the beginning of the report of the Provincial Board to Synod will start on the Friday Evening.

Synod days and sessions begin and end with worship. Evening prayers finish the day on Friday and Saturday at 9pm and Morning Prayers and Bible Study begin each day at 8am. Each Synod session begins and ends with the singing of suitable

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hymn verses selected by the President or Deputy President. Everyone is expected to attend every session and permission has to be sought from the President to be absent for any part of Synod.

The two sessions on Saturday morning are given over to a discussion on human sexuality. Many members will have read the papers on the subject prepared by the Faith and Order Committee and may have participated in the congregation discussion sessions about the issues raised by the papers. The Synod sessions will be facilitated by Rev Dr Peter Vogt, the Co-minister at Herrnhut and a member of the Unity Theological Commission. The aim is to listen respectfully to Synodals views on the subject and hear from the Faith and Order Committee about the congregational and individual responses to their papers. Following this discussion no decision will be taken that changes the current practice of the Province but a resolution will be brought that we continue to look theologically at this issue.

Saturday afternoon is the time set aside to hear the reports from our two Schools at Ockbrook in Derbyshire and Fulneck in West Yorkshire. Both these schools are set in the midst of Moravian settlements and continue the proud history of Moravian involvement in education. It will be Sr Deborah Newman's last visit to our Synod as she retires as Principal of Fulneck School at the end of this school year. Following on from this will be the Memorials (reports from the Moravian Women's Association) and the Provincial Men's Fellowship and the report of the Editorial Board of the Moravian Messenger.

The business of presenting reports to Synod begins in earnest on Saturday Evening. The Provincial Board report may need to be finished and will be followed by the Financial Reports and the Statistics. Finance Committee will then present their report. Questions on the reports are taken after each report is presented.

On Sunday the elections take priority in the order of business. The first election will be the election of a Bishop if the proposal to elect a Bishop was passed on the Friday evening. Following that will be the election of members of the Provincial Board. This will be very important as Sr Gillian Taylor, the current Chair of the Provincial Board is standing down after 10 years and Br Bob Hopcroft is standing down after 18 years on the Provincial Board. Sr Roberta Hoey and Sr Zoe Taylor both remain on the Provincial Board for another two years. Please pray that God will guide us in these elections.

On Sunday night there will be the Synod Communion in the Chapel at Swanwick when it is tradition that a retiring minister be asked to preside at the Communion Service. This year Br Hopcroft will both preach and preside at the Communion Service.

Reports will be given by the Membership and Assessment Working Party, the Faith and Order and Ecumenical Relations Committee, Church Service Committee, the Provincial Youth and Children's Committee, the Youth and Children's Work Review and Mission and Society Committee. Of particular interest will be the report pertaining to the Resolution on UK Child Poverty that was passed at the last Synod and following that will be a proposal to affiliate the Church to the End Child Poverty Coalition and a proposal asking the Provincial Board and the Bishops to meet with the MP for Hornsey and Wood Green to discuss Child Poverty. The World Mission Committee and the Young People's Missionary Association will round off the reports.

Following each report will be any proposals that pertain to the report. One proposal is to bring in voting for the Provincial Board by single transferable vote, four proposals relate to the working of the Youth and Children's Committee, one proposal asks that given our small size, a working party be set up to assess the viability of the British Province of the Moravian Church. Two proposals that will be received by acclaim (applause) are the proposals to place the names of Br James Woolford and Sr Jane Dixon on the role of regular ministers. This means that they will in due course be ordained presbyters in the Moravian Church and their probationary period will be over. Two proposals that stand on their own are a proposal to encourage the Moravian Church to celebrate the life and work of John Cennick who was born 300 years ago this year and a proposal that asks Congregations to reduce their use of single use plastics in all areas of Church life.

There is much to discuss at Synod and much more to pray about. Please lift up in prayer all the journeys to Synod, all the discussions, elections and debate over proposals. Pray that people will hear each other in love and with respect and that fellowship, one of the defining marks of the Moravian Church, will be built over the coffee and meal breaks and that our work and worship will be pleasing to God.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Herrnhut Moravian Church.



Members of the Presiding Committee including Br Peter Vogt, with one of the translators Sr Erdmute Frank (on the right).



Br Volker Schulz addressing Synod



Translation booths at Synod.

© Br David Howard

The Synod of the European Continental Province

A Shared Journey of Mission, Fellowship, Joys and Sorrows

The Synod of the European Continental Province (ECP) took place in Herrnhut between Saturday 26th May and Friday 1st June, and it was a joy and a privilege to be a guest representing our Province.

Due to worship commitments, I was unable to attend the Synod until the Monday, having missed the opening couple of days. Although the expected welcome was very warm, I was also greeted by the deeply sad news that a member of Synod, Br Mark de Voss, had been tragically killed on his way to Herrnhut in a road traffic incident. The British Province has extended our condolences to Br de Voss' family and the wider church.

From my first session, it was clear that the British Province and ECP share many concerns. Among other things, we both must wrestle with the challenges of falling membership and the constraints of falling resources, both financial and in people. One question that was asked of me time and again concerned Brexit, and I felt it necessary to comment on this during my greeting to the Synod. I reiterated many of the things we have in common and shared my hope and prayer that the bond between our two provinces would be further strengthened in the years ahead, and that Brexit does not affect our relationship within the Unity and our common mission.

There are some differences in the way we conduct our Synods, one being the ECP's need to accommodate people of other languages. Without the services of members of church both the verbal and written translations would make following what was going on almost an impossible task for me. My schoolboy German having diminished over the years!

Unlike our Synod, the ECP refer proposals, reports and other matters to Synodal Committees, similar to how Unity Synod operates. The committee I was placed in was to look at matters concerning Mission and the Worldwide Unity and like the others would report back to the whole of Synod at the plenary sessions. This committee was probably the most geographically diverse of them all, containing members from Albania, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America (Northern Province) and Great Britain. The work of the committee was very intense, and we worked in both the committee and plenary from dawn 'til dusk. It was hard work in parts, but very rewarding in others. We were particularly encouraged to hear of the work of the European Mission Agencies, the Diaconia and the province's work with refugees. These strands of the church's work are very important and are

a way for the Gospel message to be shared through both word and deed. Bible Study was also conducted in our committees, and it was interesting to be a part of a reflection on the text relating to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, especially as we came from many different contexts and backgrounds.

I am happy to report that Sr Benigna Carstens was re-elected for a further term of office on the Provincial Board, and I wish her every blessing as she continues in this ministry. Furthermore, a proposal was accepted to elect a Bishop at the Synod of 2020.

As I stated in my introduction, attending the Synod of the ECP was both a joy and a privilege. The warmth of welcome and the shared bonds of being sisters and brothers in Christ, despite our language differences, was truly amazing and a great blessing. I pray that our bonds of Christian love grow increasingly stronger as our two provinces journey together in our part of God's Kingdom and as we seek new ways of mission.

Br David Howard
Minister at Baildon and Horton



Letter

Dear Editors,

After a campaign since 2010 and a Conference in 2015, there are those among us believing most of the seven tasked to carry out the 2016 Resolution on the elimination of the U.K. Child poverty have not been able to do so.

There are one or two reasons for this stalemate but the basic one seems to be that the Resolution was not properly understood because of its wording. Therefore Br Kilner, Sr Pennington and myself are bringing another U.K. Child Poverty elimination proposal with the utmost clarity so as to be easily understood.

For the sake of our children suffering in the crisis of increasing poverty may I recommend that those who voted positively at Synod 2016 do so once more and persuade those that unfortunately did not to please vote for the new proposal.

Catherine West MP for Muswell Hill, Hornsey and Wood Green in London, and a Quaker politically committed to eliminate it, wrote to me saying 'I will of course meet members of the Moravian Church at Muswell Hill when invited.'

*Yours in Christ's work,
Br Alan Holdsworth*

A picture diary of the recent visit to Assam by the British Mission Board



Our whirlwind adventure really started here where we were warmly welcomed by Br Kabui and his family in to their home. Later that evening, we were greeted by the ladies in the community hearing an update of their work and the 34th Women's conference they had held the week prior.



After a flight from New Delhi to Silchar, via Guwahati, we were greeted at the airport by Br Kabui and some of his family to then be transported by road (1.5 hours) to Binnakandi.



Within the Binnakani town lies the Rongmei Naga community and their village.

Even though we were only in Assam for two full days we managed to ...



Take a 8.5 hour round trip to Haflong, one of the Binnakandi out stations;



See the school in Binnikandi;



Attend and take part in the Sunday service which included a baptism, confirmation of four young people and holy communion.



We only experienced a fraction of the wonderful work going on in the Assam region in these vibrant communities before having to hop back on the plane bound for the next destination.

Following our visit we have gained a much greater understanding of the priorities of the ministry and mission in Assam including:

- **building a new church and school in Haflong;**
- **further equipping women's ministry;**
- **and enabling community development projects.**

We look forward to updating you with progress on these projects and sharing news from our Brs and Srs.

Sr Zoe Taylor
British Mission Board

The Hungarian Hussite Bible

Jan Hus (1369-1415), the Bohemian Roman Catholic priest whom many see as the spiritual founder of the Moravian Church, was a firm believer in the right of the common people to read the Bible in their own language. In this he was much influenced by John Wycliffe, the early translator of the Bible into English.

The entire Bible had already been translated into Bohemian (now generally called Czech) by the time of Hus and he himself made use of it. While the Roman Church was not against translations into local languages in principle, it was both suspicious of heresy (translations being associated with those who disagreed with some aspect of the Roman Church, such as Wycliffe or the Waldensians) and concerned that translations would encourage individual rather than ecclesiastical interpretation of scripture. Unauthorised translations had already been banned by Pope Innocent III in 1199.

The Hussites of the Czech Reformation supported the use of translations and the Czech Bible was much improved by Hus and his followers. The Bethlehem Chapel, of which Hus was priest, also used a Czech translation of the Latin liturgy. Of course, at that time the common people were overwhelmingly illiterate and any translation into a local language would be either for wealthy laymen who could not cope with Latin or for reading to the illiterate.

These early translations (almost invariably made from the Roman Catholic Latin Vulgate) decreased following the Czech Reformation as the Roman Church became increasingly suspicious of their influence.

Then, with Luther and the German Reformation, Protestant translations into local languages took off. The Kralice Bible, a translation into Czech by the Moravian Brethren between 1579 and 1593, falls more clearly into this category. It remains the classic Czech Bible translation and Church House holds a rare early copy. The Hussite tradition of reading the Bible in a living language would certainly have been one of the incentives for this translation too though. These later Protestant translations however were far more likely to be based on the original Hebrew and Greek than on the Latin Vulgate version.

Although German was the other language of Bohemia there was no need for a specific Hussite translation as there were already several German translations from the Latin Vulgate. In fact one of these, known as the Wenceslas Bible, was produced in Prague in the 1370s.

The only Bible translation of which I am aware that was produced as a result of the Czech Reformation is the Hungarian Hussite Bible, only parts of which are still extant. This appears to receive no attention in histories of the early Moravian Church.

The evidence that the translation is Hussite is found in an early sixteenth century manuscript. This states that two Hungarian priests, Tamás (Thomas) Pécsi and Bálint (Valentine) Újlaki, who had studied in Prague, completed the work in the early fifteenth century. These two names are in fact recorded in the student register of Prague University which is still extant. They are there shown as having attended the University between 1399 and 1411. Here they became acquainted with Hus's teachings and become Hussites themselves. This presumably led them to the

view that Hungarian speakers, like Bohemian speakers, should also be able to read the Bible in their own tongue. They are believed to have started their translation in about 1416 and completed it by 1441.

There is other evidence that the translation is Hussite. First, the spelling of the Hungarian appears to be based on Hus's theories of how Czech should be spelt. Secondly, the 16th century source also mentions that the translation is 'heretical' and that in 1439 in order to escape persecution the priests were obliged to flee with their followers to Moldavia (now Bacau County, Romania) where there had been (and still is) a Hungarian settlement since the 13th century. They were nonetheless pursued and their translation confiscated. This would make sense in the context of Hungary's persecution of the Hussites.

How much of the Bible they translated is not known given the disappearance of the original manuscript. If the entire Bible was translated then we can be fairly certain that most of it had been lost or destroyed by 1516 since another manuscript of that date states that there are no extant translations in Hungarian of the entire Bible. What now remains of this Hungarian translation is found in three early codices (manuscripts):

- Vienna Codex c.1450 contains the books of Ruth, Judith, Ester and Maccabees;
- Munich Codex c.1466 contains the four Gospels;
- Apor Codex c.1500 contains the Psalms.

The two later codices updated the language somewhat or amended it to reflect the dialect of the copyist. have been heretical since, despite being Hussite, it was later made use of by the Roman Catholic Church. The Apor Codex, for example, was intended for reading by or to nuns.

Just as Moravian missionaries translating the Bible into native tongues had to invent new words to describe new concepts, so did the two early Hungarian translators. The extant books contain about 200 new words. Although the language is archaic it is still easily understood by a Hungarian speaker.

The production of this translation was a considerable step in the history of Hungarian writing and no small achievement. Whereas there already existed a substantial tradition of writing in Czech from the early 1300s, including non-religious works, there was very little in Hungarian. Latin remained the usual written language of Hungary throughout the Middle Ages. In fact it remained the official language of Hungary until 1844 and was a familiar spoken language for Hungarian nobility well into the 19th century.

The Hungarian Hussite Bible was followed by about eight later Bible translations into Hungarian before the translation of Gáspár Károlyi from the original Hebrew and Greek published in 1590. This remains the classic translation for Hungarian Protestants, rather as our King James's or the German Lutheran Bibles. It is, however, a comforting thought for those who love the Moravian Church that the Hussites began it all.

Adrian Wilsdon

Volunteer in the Moravian Church Archives, London

When Governments Stumble

Reflections on Zimbabwe and corruption



I know that God is speaking to me when everywhere I turn, the same subject comes up. Earlier this year, after Emmerson Mnangagwa ousted Robert Mugabe in a soft coup, people asked my opinion, knowing my Zimbabwean background. My answer, 'He is not called the Crocodile for nothing'. The crocodile is cunning and ruthless and is Mugabe's tribal totem. Mr Mnangagwa had been national security minister after independence in 1980 and was in charge of the Central Intelligence Organisation which worked with the army to suppress Zapu during the Gukurahundi (Matabele massacres) in 1983. Mr Mnangagwa has however, denied any part in the massacres (1).

Since then we have seen Grace Mugabe, the former First Lady of Zimbabwe, investigated for smuggling ivory and rhino horn from poached animals in the Zimbabwe's National Parks (2). Jacob Zuma, the ex-President of South Africa is now awaiting trial for corruption. In April this year the ex-President of South Korea, Park Geun-hye, was sentenced to 24 years imprisonment for corruption and abuse of power.

I saw an ex-Zimbabwean Christian friend in Australia. She lent me a book by Ben Freeth, also a Christian, called 'When Governments Stumble' and then found his previous book 'Mugabe and the White African'. They are both about the farm invasions and his experiences. Finally, I heard personally of four people in Harare arrested for waiting for a bus on a road recently. This reminded me of an incident when police shot tear gas at just such a group and the canister went into our driveway.

There has been land-grabbing in Hermanus in Western Cape, South Africa: a retirement village where I have holidayed all my life. The social media commented recently that the press are more interested in the Aussie cricketers than the 82 deaths, and 423 violent incidents on South African farms in 2017 and the 15 deaths and 109 violent incidents in the first three months of 2018. So what is wrong?

I believe that the church and state need to be independent of one another.

This issue has been argued from Constantine, early in Christianity, to the present day. In England, we have the notable examples of Henry II and Henry VII who had their opponents killed when they opposed their wishes. Mugabe avoided confronting the church head on, because Zimbabwe is 80% Christian and he would lose votes. He was educated a Catholic and was married in that church, which is the biggest in Zimbabwe. However, when Pius Ncube, Archbishop of Matabeleland protested the Gukurahundi massacres, he was undermined by a smear campaign in the Government owned press and eventually forced to retire.

The Anglican Church in Zimbabwe was undermined by Bishop Norbert Kunonga who was an avid supporter of President Mugabe, describing him a 'prophet of God' (3). He promised young priests advancement in the church in return for their vote. When he was elected, he replaced the incumbents. The congregations refused to recognise the new priests, so met in

the car parks and later in schools and halls. This has been corrected only fairly recently. He also sent thugs in a white van to enforce obedience from church workers and misused the Cathedral premises.

My direct experience was in the reformed Churches in Zimbabwe, where I heard of a Methodist church being sued for accepting foreign currency. A stranger, with a brief case came into an early service of mine, which was small, about 40 people, so he stood out. The Old Testament reading came from Micah Ch.2 and was about land grabbing. He left after that! A colleague was closely watched by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIO) and had his church offices burned down with all the records.

Why is this separation so important?

The church needs to be able to speak out for justice. My plastic surgeon was chatting in his reception area when he suddenly turned to me and said 'What are the church doing about it?' We had paid for a page long advert in the press to protest but it seemed lame in the face of all that was happening. The rule of law had been changed to 'rule by law'. Every time Mugabe came across a law which barred his way, he simply put another law through Parliament which was itself illegal because of election rigging and intimidation.

From the beginning of independence land acquisition was a major issue in Zimbabwe. In the 1980s the principle of 'willing buyer, willing seller' was supposed to be adopted but money for land purchase was diverted to defence expenditure. In 1985 the Government gained the powers to purchase excess land and in 1992 the Land Acquisition Act enabled the compulsory purchase of any land the Government wanted.

There was systematic intimidation of the white farmers which occurred particularly during Gukurahundi when fifty white farmers were killed in the Midlands and Matabeleland. Nine out of forty-one farmers were left in Matabeleland in 1983 (4). The persecution also increased from 2000 when Mugabe found his position threatened by a stronger opposition. Farms were invaded by gangs of thugs who terrorised the farmers in their home, beat them up and murdered some. A series of laws made it 'legal' to acquire farms, which were meant to go to the rural poor. In fact, they were used as bribes for Mugabe's friends, who had no interest or skill in farming which is hard work. We called them 'the Pajero brigade' because they would arrive in fancy vehicles over the weekend, toss out some bags of food and possibly money and then party.

I personally knew four couples who endured this and eventually left their farms, which deteriorated from neglect and the theft of equipment. I have seen this happen near my childhood home in South Africa where a citrus farm now lies desolate and the educational institutions which used to be surrounded by leafy gardens are now a scratching patch for hens and goats. Ben Freeth and his father-in-law took Mugabe to an international court and won but Mugabe simply ignored the ruling.

The Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe chose to follow

a path of appeasement of the Government, recognising the laws as they were passed. I found the same with the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. I was on the committee but my comments were ignored. Then I spoke out in public from the high table at a donors' conference and was suppressed by the president. The next time I spoke from the floor at a discussion on new laws controlling donors and suppressing the media, to no avail. They were being threatened in the press: the headline being 'Does ZCC have a death wish?'

For the rule of law and justice to prevail, a free press is essential. Ian Smith, of UDI fame, began the rot when he censored the biggest newspaper. At least we knew about the censorship, because the editors left blank spaces. Mugabe simply took over the papers. When the Independent was founded, he had their offices blown up. However, the media should not become another tyrant. Another requirement is a free judiciary. Mugabe replaced dissenting judges with his own yes-men.

The result of this despotism, nepotism, corruption and destruction is that

Zimbabwe has gone from being the bread basket of Africa to starvation of the rural poor; from 90% literacy to an unbalanced school system where only wealth counts; and to the breakdown of the medical system where the same is true. Rampant inflation has made a nonsense of the economy.

As individuals and churches we need first to seek God's will in prayer and Bible reading, inform ourselves before voting (a privilege) and think carefully about governance and issues as freedom and licence, the uneven distribution of wealth, capitalism, democracy, socialism and communism.

Zimbabwe will be holding a General Election on 30th July. Please pray for this country and give thanks for our own democracy. Bible readings to reflect on about this issue are Psalm 37:1-19 and feel the emphasis on land and righteousness, Micah 2:1-2 where the prophet speaks woe to those who seize lands and Ephesians 6:10-18 where the Apostle Paul calls for us to put on the full armour of God.

Sr Dilys Howard
Leominster

(1) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-41995876>, Emmerson Mnangagwa: The 'crocodile' who snapped back, BBC News 24th November 2017.

(2) <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/grace-mugabe-smuggled-poached-ivory-cfb3bzvsq> The Times 26th March 2018.

(3) <https://dioceseofhararepcpa.wordpress.com/2008/06/12/kunonga-excommunicated-as-persecution-of-anglicans-continues-episcopal-life-us-19-may-08/>

(4) 'Mugabe and the White African' by Ben Freeth (2011), p.25. See also 'Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Zimbabwean Newsmen', by Geoffrey Nyarota (2006); and 'Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa', by Peter Godwin (1997).

Rev David Bunney

Rev David Bunney died on 26th December 2017. David was a United Reformed Church Minister who served the joint Moravian and URC congregation at Bedford St Luke's from November 2004 until its closure in October 2008. During his time at St Luke's he fully embraced life as a Moravian minister and attended synods including the Continental Province Synod and ministers meetings and enjoyed the fellowship of the Moravian Church. After retirement he took occasional Moravian services in the Moravian Churches in the Western District. David was well read, erudite and musical. He was a valued contributor to the Moravian Messenger with significant articles on music. In 2017 he gave a paper at 'My heart strangely warmed' the Moravian, Methodist and Lutheran Day at Fulneck, celebrating the Reformation's influence on art and music in Europe. As a fluent German speaker and lover of railways he delighted in travelling across Europe to attend the Moravian Ministers Conference at Montmirail and at Herrnhut. He made many friends in the Moravian Church who will miss his intelligent faith and friendship and his sense of humour as witnessed by his personal email name 'holyrabbit'.

We will remember his life and service with gratitude at Synod and offer our sympathy to his family.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editor

Too old for summer camp? Would like to help?



Then support camp with your prayers and money. The fee paid for the young people only covers the cost of their accommodation and meals, money for extras has to be raised from other sources. Perhaps you would like to pay for a young person to get into Alton Towers for £22 (£24.50 if over 16); or £190 would allow 12 young people to do an activity at Carsington Water; or £190 for craft materials; donations from £5 to £500 (that would be an amazing craft!) would help cover the cost of resources for on site activities, from balloons to games equipment, marshmallows for campfire, drinks in the tea shop, or boring things like First Aid kits, medicines etc.

To make a donation please contact your minister or Joy Raynor (joy.raynor@moravian.org.uk or phone 01753553549)



Ockbrook School Report



© Ockbrook School

We are delighted with our latest Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection, with headmaster Tom Brooksby describing the outstanding feedback from inspectors as 'a full team effort and a great achievement'.

The key findings of the inspection, which took place over three days in February, concluded that pupils' academic and other achievements are good and the quality of their personal development is excellent.

Tom expressed his gratitude to all involved in the school community: 'This excellent report is the culmination of the hard work and commitment of our pupils and staff over the last few years. It rightly recognises our many achievements and sets us on an exciting course into the future.

Inspectors highlighted our pupils' strong

academic results, their well-developed skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and their strong work ethic. They went on to acknowledge pupils' 'excellent levels of self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-reliance' and their 'excellent awareness of the wider social context in which they live'.

The School's Trustees and Governors were equally delighted. Amanda Redgate is the Chair of Governors and said: 'It is heartening and gratifying to read how accurately the report captures the crucial essence of Ockbrook School; a fine achievement.'

Helen Springall, Deputy Head, added: 'It is very pleasing to read judgements such as 'standards in extra-curricular activities are high and participation rates are excellent; pupils have excellent capacity for making

decisions and their excellent behaviour is a reflection of efficient and sensitive pastoral care'. Our pastoral system is at the centre of all we do at Ockbrook and it has been recognised as first rate.'

Tom concluded: 'This glowing report is nothing less than Ockbrook School deserves, but we are not complacent here and we are already planning new strategies that will improve our wonderful school further still. Ockbrook has a proud history and a tradition of success dating back over two hundred years but, right now, we have our sights set firmly on our bright future.'

Claire McMain

Personal Assistant to the Headmaster at Ockbrook School

Congregation News

Swindon

During March, our congregation joined with friends from the Quakers, to provide a Lent lunch in Swindon town centre. Later in the month we travelled to Bath Weston for a joint Maundy Thursday service.

Shortly afterwards, we held our annual Easter Fayre in the church, which was followed by a lively Easter fun day for the Beavers and Rainbows. Lots of crafts, activities and an egg hunt.

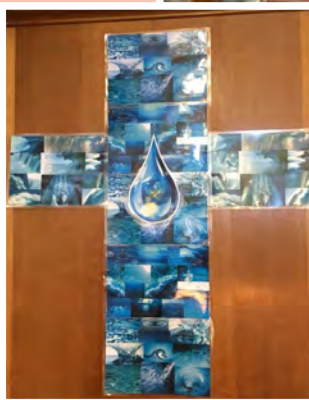
The Rainbows enjoyed a visit to the co-op for a fair trade evening, which included a chance to sit in a police car (whilst sounding the siren and activating the blue lights!) after the police were called to an incident whilst we were there. The Beavers have been making the most of the good weather, with visits to the local parks, making bug houses and flying kites. Paul invites both groups to regular parade services and involves all the children with lively puppet shows.

During April, we hosted our first MWA Away Day: our small circle has been planning the day for some time. We hosted the executive committee in our own church, on the Friday, for their meetings. The following day, we moved to a local UR church for the away day. Rev Moyra Davies gave an inspiring address on our theme 'the power of living water' and Sr Patsy Holdsworth led the communion service. The six workshops ranged from a legal talk, to a walk to learn about the Wiltshire Moonrakers.



© Sr Sandy Mundy

MWA Away Day at Swindon



Our minister, Paul, led a singing workshop, and the group shared with us a lovely rendition of the piece they had learnt. It was a wonderful day of worship and fellowship.

During May, we were saddened to hear of the death of Br Michael Robinson, a lifelong member of Swindon Moravian Church. Although, having moved from Swindon some years ago, Michael and his family made the 60 mile trip from Dorset, every month, for communion Sunday, plus other services, activities and meetings. He was a kind,

humble man and a talented musician - always willing to play the organ and piano. Michael will be greatly missed by us all and our thoughts are with Pat, Pauline, Bill, Amy and Clair.

On 13th May, we enjoyed visiting Tytherton for their anniversary service, led by Sr Patsy. A lovely service, followed by a feast! It was also lovely to see Brs Peter and Pete Gubi, no strangers to the Western District.

Sr Sandy Mundy

University Road Belfast

Since we last shared our congregation news with Messenger readers we at University Road have had a time of very mixed emotions. As a congregation we have experienced both sadness and joy.

The sadness came from the loss of a number of longstanding and faithful members, three of whom died in October 2017.

Sr Carol Fisher had been a part of the University Road 'family' for very many years but it was only in May 2017 that she expressed a wish to be confirmed and her confirmation service conducted by Br Livingstone Thompson was a memorable and emotional occasion. Carol was a very active member of the MWA, taking part in many overseas visits, conferences and retreats and she will be fondly remembered not only by sisters at University Road but also throughout the Irish District and beyond.

Br William Jackson who also died in October 2017 had been, with his wife Harriet, a loyal member of the congregation for many years. Although we had not seen him in church for some considerable time due to progressively failing health, the pastoral support offered by our ministers was very important to his family over a period of years.



Br Jackie Morrow
© Sr Carol Ackah

Br Jackie Morrow was received into membership at University Road when his wife Joyce and their daughters transferred their membership from Gracehill in the mid 1980s. He immediately became a popular member of the congregation and soon his obvious abilities and his reliability led to his election to the congregation committee. He served with distinction for the best part of twenty years, the latter half of which was in the role of Treasurer.



Br Livingstone Thompson and Sr Carol Fisher
© Sr Carol Fisher

His untimely death in October 2017 was marked by a real sadness amongst all who knew him.

We will sadly miss all of the above and we keep their families in our prayers.

As a congregation however we have also had the joy of welcoming new members through infant baptism and welcoming others into full communicant membership through confirmation.

In January 2018 Thomasina Esther Parkes was baptised and in February there was further joy when little Charlotte Geddes was baptised. Thomasina is the granddaughter and Charlotte the great granddaughter of Thomasina Miller whose family has had a longstanding connection with University Road over several generations. Sr Thomasina (senior) was

herself one of those confirmed at a service on 6 May 2018 and, perhaps uniquely, she was joined on that occasion by her daughter Angela Miller who was the other candidate for confirmation.

We welcome and are grateful for the vibrancy which our new members bring and give thanks for those who have gone before in the service of our congregation.

Sr Carol Ackah

Fulneck

On 10th February Junior Church held a Mardi Gras event to celebrate the beginning of Lent. Br Michael Newman explained the meaning of Lent to the children before the fun began. Sr Maree Thompson made the pancakes.

Lent lunches were held as usual, but the bad weather affected attendance and one lunch had to be cancelled. The Dramatic Society's production of 'The Canterbury Tales' in March took place before reduced audiences because of snow, so the play was revived for three further performances in May so that those who had been unable to attend before could see it.

On 13th May a memorable Cafe Church was held in the Boys' Brigade Building. Tea and delicious cakes were served as we began exploring the theme of friendship. The importance of communicating with each other, with children and with Jesus was introduced. A century-old autograph book was compared to the way we express our friendships today. Ideas, such as giving High Fives, to Twitter and Facebook were mentioned, along with ways we can stay in touch with Jesus. One member produced an acrostic about true friendship:

**Forever
Really kind
Indispensable
Never too busy
Dear to me**



Exploring the theme of friendship at Cafe Church
© Sr Lisa Dickinson

Our friends and Jesus are there in joy and sadness and have a true understanding of us. The photograph shows Harrison and Kieran Dickinson demonstrating the action song.

A well-attended District Mission Evening was held on 17th May. Br Michael Newman talked about

his visit to the Unity Conference in South Africa whilst Br Robert Hopcroft spoke about Elim Home (also in South Africa) which cares for profoundly disabled children. He went on to describe the missionary work being undertaken in South East Asia. The meeting was illuminating and inspiring.

On 20th May the Sisters' Festival took place, starting at the cafe at No. 54. After a delicious breakfast the twenty-seven ladies took the Cup of Covenant led by Sr Jane Dixon, Minister at Lower Wyke, who also conducted the morning worship in the church.

Br David Ingham

Gomersal

Following three separate incidents of theft of the Yorkshire stone flags from our church pathway, we took the decision, to prevent further thefts by replacing them all with Indian stone. We are now reaping the benefit of our actions by having a level and much safer access to church.

In May we held our 16th annual Safari Supper, held in church but still called Safari Supper as originally we travelled to a different house for each course. This year 41 people enjoyed wonderful evening of fellowship, whilst eating a delicious four course meal.



© Sr Norma Machell

Safari dinner

Well Being Wednesday has been a feature of our activities for a number of years. From the beginning of May this year it has been extended from two to four meetings per month. Two new groups have been added to the original Walk plus Yoga and the Julian Meeting. The new activities include a Walking for Health group which had its first walk on 2nd May, and attracted ten walkers. We were blessed with good weather for our 60 minute walk around Gomersal. Carpet Bowls got under way in Church on 23rd May. This was for all abilities, which was a good thing, as some of us were hopeless (I am thinking of myself in particular). We had lots of fun and laughter and it was attended by 19 enthusiastic bowlers. All the Well Being meetings are followed by refreshments and plenty of chat.

Sr Norma Machell



© Sr Norma Machell

Carpet bowls

Brockweir

*'Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough ...'*

Poetry, like Marmite divides the nation. Some people love it with a passion and others are left largely unmoved. It partly depends upon how we were introduced to it at school, for many of my friends regarded learning large swathes of 19th century verse as a punishment rather than a cornucopia of delight. Hopefully times and teaching styles have changed, for if we persevere, words explode with meaning as we are catapulted into other worlds and experiences.

Poetry is all around us, if we care to look; in popular song lyrics, hymns, leaflets in doctor's surgeries, the Watchwords and the Bible. It can also summarise the mood of a city or a region, we have only to think back to the events of 22nd May 2017 at Manchester Arena when Tony Walsh's poem 'This is the place' spread around the world. It is with interest therefore that I await the deliberations of the Book Group as we begin 'The Splash of Words' by Mark Oakley. The book is written 'for those who are committed to a religious faith, or who are intrigued by the possibility of such a commitment ...' Having attended the first reading it



© Sr Philip Ashton

Sr Groves with jams

did not disappoint, as we collapsed in laughter for all manner of bizarre reasons!

We have been busy fundraising and are grateful to Srs Heather Armstrong and Hilary Lee for hosting a coffee morning and plant sale. Sr Patsy Holdsworth has painted a delightful watercolour picture of the church, which we've had made into cards which can be used for any occasion. Last but not least, Sr Sue Groves has been boiling up great cauldrons of jams and chutneys for sale in the porch with an honesty box and has raised hundreds over the year. Keep trying those new potions!

Sr Judith Ashton

Horton

We had the usual Christmas events and though not as well attended as last year we enjoyed the season of advent and Christmas together as a small congregation. Many now go on holiday at Christmas or visit relatives at this time of year.

January was the pulpit interchange for BD5 district, we had the great pleasure of a visit from Father Lorenzo from the Italian church. His laughter was infectious and his message about even though we have our differences it's our faith that brings us together was well received. Our minister Br David preached at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church.

February saw Sr Maureen Colbert lead us in another cafe church. The theme this time was the Chinese new year which is the year of the dog. Cafe church is a good way of bringing in people who come to worship with us in a more relaxed form first by attending the cafe church services. So we must thank Sr Maureen for her hard work and all who take part in her services as I'm sure Maureen would agree it is a joint congregation effort. Br Jamie Spencer and Sr Linda Haggas led a service in February and we thank those lay preachers who fill our pulpit in the alternative weeks our minister is at Baildon.

A funeral was held for Sayles Edward Rimmington in February. He was in our Boys' Brigade company many years ago and although he hadn't attended church for many, many years he never forgot us and requested his funeral was held at our church and we were pleased to honour his request.

Like other congregations in our area many of our events had to be cancelled owing to the adverse weather we had during March and April. The weather was so extreme that it led to the cancellation of our Sunday morning service on 18th March. It is a long time since we had to cancel a service.



© Sr Linda Haggas

Lunch on Gift Day

Our Easter services included Good Friday and Easter Day, and we held a joint service on Maundy Thursday with our sister congregation Baildon.

On Sunday 8th April our Lovefeast and Communion service was conducted by Sr Jane Dixon; we were glad to see her again as the last time she led worship was when she was in training.

Some of our ladies travelled to Swindon for the MWA away day and by all reports they had a good day but would have liked to have seen the Swindon Moravian Church which wasn't used at the away day.

Sunday 22nd April is our Gift Day which is now a service of thanksgiving - this is our main fundraising event. The service is a good chance for all to get together and for each department to share their fund raising efforts throughout the year. A lovely lunch followed the service and we raised nearly £3,000 towards the maintaining and running of our church. Thanks go to Br Rodney Wood, our treasurer, and to all who donated their money and their time.

For Christian Aid week Srs Elisabeth Hollindrake and Maureen Colbert are doing sponsored litter pick collections in the local area. We wish them well in their endeavours.

We are now looking forward to some drier and warmer weather. We trust in our God that He will supply all our needs in the future.

Sr Linda Haggas

From Church House	
Provincial Diary for July	
June 28th-July 2nd European Women's Conference, Zeist	
July 6th-July 9th	Synod, the Hayes Centre, Swanwick
July 24th	PEC, BMB and Estates at Church House

6	Martyrdom of Jan Hus at Constance in 1415
8	Sea Sunday (www.seasundayhero.org)
17	World Day for International Justice
30	World Day Against Trafficking In Persons

Congregational Register		
Baptisms		
27th May 2018	George Jenson Forshaw	Fairfield
Deaths		
2nd May 2018	Michael Hugh Robinson	Swindon
14th May 2018	Audrey Edith Spanton	Fulneck
18th May 2018	Cathy Brennan	Ockbrook



From the Sanctuary

British Mission Board (BMB) News

I have been recently reflecting on if I give sacrificially to God - not just with my time and gifts (which I, like others, do willingly), but with my 'gold and silver'? When was the last time that I gave sacrificially to the Church? Those reflections then took me into thinking: do we, as Christians, know how to give sacrificially to God anymore - or have we become too comfortable and self-centred, where our money is concerned - and we just give God the left-overs?

Church shouldn't be about money, and about fund-raising - although the fellowship gained in fund-raising events is often good, and the events bring some people into contact with the Church who otherwise don't cross the threshold. However, when was the last time that any of us went without a holiday in order to substantively pay for a Church project? When was the last time any of us forwent the installation of a new kitchen, or conservatory, at home, in order to pay for a new kitchen facility within the Church? When was the last time that we didn't buy the new car, or the new flooring, that we were saving for, because we wanted the Church to have something lovely and useful in the service of God - without the need for fund-raising?

Many of the lovely buildings in which God is worshipped, were built because people gave sacrificially - and they weren't just rich people who could afford a bit of philanthropy (although some

were). Fairfield settlement was built because John Lees sold three of his coalmines in order to finance the building of the settlement, and others also gave sacrificially as they were able to. Zinzendorf spent most of his fortune on establishing the Moravian Church, building settlements like Fetter Lane and Fulneck from his own money. Mrs Bates, likewise, gave sacrificially with Ockbrook and Gracehill. Others also contributed generously. They did so, because they could, and out of a response of gratitude to God, for what God has done (and does) for them. They weren't bothered about 'laying up wealth on earth' (1 Timothy 6: 17-19) and making life 'comfortable', but gave all they could in gratitude for what Christ had done for them (Matthew 19: 16-24). We seem to have lost sight of that sacrifice - and our response to it, through faith.

So, how much do I really believe that to be 'poor' in the things of earth, is to be 'rich' in the things of heaven (Luke 6: 20)? I have grown up in the West Indies and seen proper poverty, and I have also met among those who are very poor, a strong sense of faith - and of giving generously from the little they have (the widow's mite). So, why do we, who are relatively well-off and comfortable, always look to others to pay for our Church - when God gives us so much?

Br Peter Gubi, Dukinfield

In October, there will be a Church Development Conference in New Delhi to consider the future of the South Asia Mission Area. A committee will work on creating the framework and future structures, bringing proposals to the conference. The committee will be made up of Brs Thespall Kundan, Samson Thangpa, Ebenezer Gangmei and Sr Vani Pradhan.

With support from YPMA, the British Mission Board will be funding two new buses in Ladakh. They will be used in Chiktan and Khalatse to transport children from villages in remote areas.



Remember Br Ezekiel Yona in your prayers as he is consecrated Bishop of the Unity in early July.

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