



'Is our future in our history?'

John 17, 15-23

This is the first part of the sermon given by Br Jørgen Bøytler at the opening service of the 2018 British Provincial Synod - the second part continues in next month's issue.

The Canadian literate Northrop Frye says; "The past is not something to which you return, but something that is recreated."

The Moravian Church history covers but a short time in the history of Christianity and in the history of the world. The incarnation of Christ, becoming a human being, is eternity entering time, the eternal God giving Himself in time through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. It is God offering human beings availability of God in time, in our reality. The Word becomes flesh. God enters time in order to open eternity for human beings. Therefore, when we are in church today, the story of Christ is repeated once again through our being a church. Our future as a church is connected to the past, to the history, the story of Christ, the good news. It is connected to our history as a Church. The question is how this truth becomes a living reality in our being a Church today, and how our history can be meaningful in today's context.

Before moving to the prayer of Jesus for his disciples, we will go back to the times of creation, because a very fundamental truth is to be found there, namely: "Before everything existed, there

was love." If we should ever find a reason, why God created the world, it must have been based on God's love. He made a masterpiece; he created the universe, which is still to a large degree unexplainable for us. I find that the real proof for love existing before anything else is the creation of man. God created us in His own image; He wanted company. When Adam was disobedient and lost the grace of being good, God must have been endlessly sad, crying, because the only part of creation created in His image was now an enemy. Augustine taught us that Adam was created and how he lost the original grace given by God. The lost grace becomes a gift to us, because of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Through His death we can receive grace once again, that grace which frees us from the power of sin. It is because of the grace of God that we are given our lives and it is only by this grace that we are saved. Grace is the supremacy of God in our lives and by His grace we are devoted and committed to follow Him. Augustine said: "Give me Lord the grace to do as you command," so for him grace is what leads us to do God's will and not ours.

Continues inside on page 98



**Church away
from home**

(page 100)



**Introducing the new
Board Members**

(page 102-103)



**Denksteinfeier: the
Annual Celebration of
June 17th at Herrnhut**

(pages 104)



**European Women's
Conference in the
Netherlands**

(page 105)

'Is our future in our history?' *continued*

With God's eternal love as foundation, Jesus, in his high priestly prayer for his disciples, is drawing on what turned out to be one of the first historical lines in church history. Jesus, God yet Son of Man, states that he is not belonging to the world, as are his followers. They live in the world, but they are in a living fellowship with Christ. They are sanctified in the truth, the truth being Jesus Christ. As the Father and the Son are one, they shall be one. And it means that we shall be one. The oneness of the Triune God is given to those who believe. The Glory of God has been given to them. From these disciples, the history and therefore the story, the narrative goes on through generations, and now we are given the truth, not as something to keep for ourselves, but give to others. Our history is rooted in Jesus Christ creating the oneness between God and man. Thereby, we, as Christians, in our case, as Moravians are called into oneness with one another.

When we are asking if our future can be found in our history, the answer is not short and easy. We are part of a history as a church that in our case took its beginning some 600 years ago, when the first roots to our church were created. But the relation between us and history goes back to Jesus praying that his followers may continue in oneness and continue in the truth.

We are living in a time, where truth is not considered unquestionable; there is supposed to be no objective truth say our contemporary, postmodern soothsayers. Yet, as followers of Jesus Christ we are called into the truth.

We can learn from John Hus, who was willing to give his life because of his conviction that the church of his time was not following the will of God as revealed in Scripture. Yet, his dying words were directed to the living Word as he sang, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."

In the interpretation of Scripture, we may find our foundational point of departure, when looking for a way forward, into the future. In 1419, four years after Hus's death, the Hussite league declared as one of the Four Articles of Prague, that "the living word in dialogue between the preacher and the congregation is the real expression of faith." They spoke of it as the "prophetic and apostolic message of the Word of God," and said that it should be preached freely and in the vernacular of the people. Peter Chelcicky preached that people should "accept the simple words of Scripture and believe above all in the example of Christ." That makes sense to us, even today!

In 1457, a group of Hussites, led by Gregory, distinguished themselves as "Brethren of the Law of Christ," and in 1464 they passed a resolution affirming that this law of Christ was shown

through the Bible. By the late 1400's, the Brethren were making an important distinction between the essentials and those things that ministered to the essentials. The Bible was considered to be a ministerial, but the great Moravian theologian, Luke of Prague, called it "that first, greatest and most necessary ministerial thing." The Apology written by the Unitas Fratrum in 1503 stated that the "Word of God is the ministrative by which God is made known."

Scripture is calling us into worship, faith and to discipleship, not unlike the understanding of the early Moravian Church, and of the renewed Moravian Church. The Christian call to discipleship invites people to worship the God of grace, who promises fullness of life for all, to follow in the way of Jesus who said, "I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest" (John 10:10), and to be empowered and transformed by the movement of the Spirit.

Jesus prayed that his followers would reflect the unity of the Triune God. He even commanded them to do the liberating work of restoring relationships within all creation and gave to his followers the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower them for this work. We Moravians, together with many others, claim this as our hope and our calling.

This act of discipleship leads us to live out God's love in Jesus Christ by inspiring people to walk ways that are different from the world. The Holy Spirit accompanies us on the journey of faith, teaching us the way of Christ, empowering us to resist and reject powers of domination that would demand our allegiance and refreshes us for the mission to which we have been called.

We can and do receive and share this faith, both as a personal calling and as a community of followers of Jesus moving toward a life of fullness, giving witness to the ultimate reign of God and God's intention of a world marked by justice and love. This is a transforming calling and mission. We are transformed personally and collectively and are agents of God's transforming love in a broken world. We hear this call, which unites us in our hopes and our prayers. It is the same call that took early Moravians to new countries, new continents. From them, we can learn to pursue the call as they did.

Br Jørgen Bøytler

*Unity Board Administrator and Minister
of Christiansfeld Moravian Church*



© Sr Sarah Groves

Synod 2018 Report from the Youth Representatives

This year at Synod the Youth Representatives were Josh Cooper from the Royton congregation and Katie Biggs from Fairfield. Despite the Lancashire accent of the representatives, with Josh's experience as a Summer Camp leader and Katie's position on the Provincial Youth and Children's Committee we were hopefully able to represent the whole Province.

I am sure that Josh and I will not be the only ones to say that there was a real feel of hopefulness and excitement during the weekend. Discussions were inspiring and open; there was the opportunity to discuss serious issues impacting our church from human sexuality to the church's future. These conversations and debates though, despite their occasionally controversial natures, were done in kindness and in the spirit of fellowship and grace. As Youth Representatives we felt our voices were not only heard but that we could contribute valuably to the discussions.

In an effort to get more youth voices participating at this higher level of governance of the church, Josh and I brought a proposal to the Synod for a Moravian Youth Forum (otherwise known as My Forum). The event for young people aged 14-26 aims to bring the community together to discuss how Synod functions, what the provincial committees do and

prompt discussion so that they can bring any proposals they wish to the next Synod. This gives our young people a chance to have their voice heard, and I have a feeling that you won't be able to put them back in their box afterwards.

This was not the only really exciting proposal brought forward. The encouragement for churches to stop using single use plastics was a particularly great moment of the Synod. As Christians we have a responsibility to consider how our lifestyles impact upon the natural and animal world, and as a society we are becoming increasingly aware of the hugely destructive power of plastic on ecosystems. Like the championing of free trade products in the past, discouraging the use of single use plastic is a way that we as churches can use our commercial power, and our power as an example in our communities, to put our weight behind a moral and environmental cause. We are one of the first churches in the UK to seek to go entirely single use plastic free by 2020 and to be able to vote on the passing of this at Synod was a real highlight for us as Youth Representatives.

This year at Synod, we were not only voting on proposals or listening to reports, we also elected a bishop. As soon as PEC brought the proposal to elect another

Bishop, there was a lot of discussion in free time regarding the length of the election process and its strenuous and perhaps stressful nature. Yet the prayerful and grace led manner in which Sarah was elected was both a very spiritual and moving experience. It was a moment when I was proud to be Moravian and felt part of our history and community leading back with the line of bishops who have been elected before.

As always, a key part of the weekend was not just the voting, but the fellowship shared amongst those there. There were representatives from a range of denominations as well as our partners in the wider Unity. Personally I found my discussions with Jared, Jan and Erdmute and their stories of Moravian work around the world particularly inspiring. I left many of my conversations over the weekend fired up and ready for action during the inter-synodal period - which is surely exactly what Synod wishes to achieve.

It was my second time as a Youth Representative and Josh's first. We were hopefully a team to be reckoned with and demonstrated how much it is possible to represent the young people of our church effectively. We loved every minute of it.

Sr Katie Biggs and Br Josh Cooper

Fairfield Calendars 2019

Full colour, 13 unique prints from individually drawn artistic impressions from Fairfield and celebrating its church year.

Price £5.00 plus £2.00 P&P.



To order one please contact Sr J Warr on **0161 370 0132** or by email **jwarr@uwclub.net**

(all profits to Fairfield Moravian Church).



Church away from home

Moving is major. You may be moving away from home for the first time to go to university, or moving for the 5th time in six years to chase jobs or loved ones. Either way, moving city or moving to a new area may mean that you can no longer make it to your normal home church regularly any longer. Finding a new church can be as stressful as moving house and can fall to the bottom of the priority list amongst fresher's week or sorting out council tax. Yet finding a church where you feel at home and can grow in your faith can transform your experience in a new place.

So here are some top tips on finding a new church in a new area from someone who moved from Fairfield to York for university four years ago and has just, a matter of weeks ago, moved to Edinburgh.

Church doesn't only happen on a Sunday Morning

Getting up to go to church on a Sunday morning for an 11am service is always a challenge. Well, when you're the only one in your house doing it after what has normally been a social Saturday night - it gets much harder. This can leave you thinking that either church doesn't fit into your new lifestyle away from home or that you have to sacrifice something else in order that you're bright-eyed singing hymns by 11:10am. But fear not, there is church outside of Sunday mornings. Lots of student churches do evening services at 6pm that are designed for young people aged 18-30 which may even involve a trip to the pub afterwards. Churches sometimes do mid-week services as well which may fit in better around your schedule. There are many different forms of church as well: prayer meetings and small groups can also be a great way to touch base with the Big Man during the week.

Don't be put off by labels

If someone had told me that during my three years at university I would have worshipped in a super church of 1,000 members,

I'd have laughed you out of the room. Yet my time at the super church was challenging, inspiring and faith transforming - but I would never have walked into the service if I'd have known what 'label' the church belonged to. It just wasn't me. Churches belong to lots of different labels, denominations or groups and with each one comes a stereotype: 'happy clappy' or 'boring' to name a couple. Moving away from home is the chance to establish and grow your faith but it is equally the chance to be challenged. Due to the number of Moravian churches, it is unlikely that when moving away from home you'll be round the corner from one of our churches. This doesn't need to scare you off though from not going to church at all. Try churches that are different denominations and styles and see what they feel like - do you feel comfortable there? Are the people nice? Was the sermon and worship good? Do the teachings fit with what you believe? Judge the church from how you feel when you're there rather than the name on the door.

Wear your faith on your sleeve

I discovered my church in York when one of my new housemates noticed I had a bracelet on with a cross during a trip to get ice cream to eat whilst we watched Bake Off. True story. That little cross prompted us to discover that we were both Christians - something that had otherwise not come up during a week of nights out and kitchen chats - and she had mentioned that a friend of a friend back home had recommended a church to her. We decided to go and worshipped there together for over three years.

You meet so many people when you move to university or a new city and, as sad as it sounds, any one of them could turn into a lifelong friend or a fellow church goer. Wearing crosses isn't something which is central to our faith or practice as Moravians and equally to wear some kind of religious symbol is very much in fashion right now. But you can often tell when someone is wearing a cross due to their faith - it is often smaller and may be on their wrist or on a necklace - rather than for a fashion statement. I am not saying you should wear an 'I'm a

Christian' tee shirt, but if you do notice someone in your house, course or new job is wearing a religious symbol I recommend that you get chatting to them. They could be a fellow Christian and maybe even recommend a church to you, or they could just take their fashion inspiration from the Pope. It's worth asking the question though.

Do your research

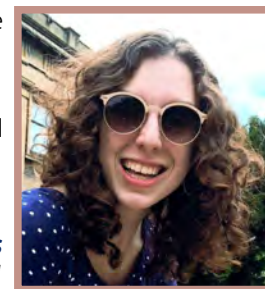
I must say at the start that that I am a person who has to-do-lists for their to-do-lists and this may only suit certain types of people.

But doing research of local churches, for me, is a key but boring stage. You can do your searching online or simply by talking to people in your local congregation as they may have a recommendation for you of a new church. Either can turn up the goods. There is also Student Linkup (<https://www.fusionmovement.org/find-a-church>) which is run by Fusion. Fusion is a charity for Christian students and this website allows you to search an area and look up different local church profiles. The church explains what services they run, what work they do for young people and explain a bit about themselves. You can then connect with churches which means someone from the church gets in contact with you so that when you first go to a service you have someone to sit next to who is a long-time member of the church in the same age range as you. Student Linkup isn't only for students though, they have information on what churches offer for young people up to age 30. Finding a church in a new area can transform your time there so prepare however suits you best - this may be a spreadsheet or it could be having a wander round your local area on a Sunday morning.

It takes time

This is the hardest thing about finding a new church in a new area. It's not easy. There is so much choice and because you can generally only go to one church service a week (as they have the annoying habit of often all happening at roughly the same time) it may take weeks or even months to find a church you feel at home in. But it is worth taking the time. By looking, you'll find out more clearly what it is you want in a church and this may not be the same as what you expected. A church can be a place of security, fellowship and spiritual peace amongst the craziness of moving, and that means it is worth investing the time and keeping looking for the right one. There are a million and one churches out there and you will find the one which works for you; this doesn't mean it's perfect, but instead is somewhere you feel comfortable and can grow.

Sr Katie Biggs
Fairfield



Open the Book



© Elaine Kearsley

I write this having recently returned from a delightful afternoon tea at our local infants' school. This was put on in our honour as thanks for the weekly "assemblies" we do under the auspices of "Open the Book". This is a series of dramatic presentations of Bible stories we do every Tuesday morning at the infants' school assembly.

It is a fantastic privilege to be able to present Bible stories to some 200 young children, many of whom might have no other contact with the Bible. How does it work? Our church, the Hucclecote Methodist Church in Gloucester, has forged a relationship with our local infants' school. We use the material published by "Open the Book", now under the auspices of the Bible Society, so there is no need to write or otherwise construct any of the material. There are books for Years 1, 2 and 3, which we work our way through throughout the school year. All we do is to practice each piece, and dress up accordingly: we have quite a "wardrobe" section now, (but some groups prefer not to dress up). Each presentation takes about ten minutes. The stories are so written that if there are not sufficient actors, the whole thing can be read by a single person. We have about eight in our group, although most stories are written for between two and six actors, with an Opener and Closer, and Narrator. There are many opportunities for volunteers from the children, and Wardrobes has made up a number of children's costumes.

We are so fortunate in working with appreciative and co-operative school staff, who have even obtained the Open the Book text books in order to help prepare their lessons to complement our presentations.

Do the children enjoy it? As a prelude to the afternoon tea we were presented with three volumes, one for each year, of messages written by the children, who unanimously claim that they love it, especially when they can volunteer to join in. (I had no idea there were so many different spellings for Jesus and Bible!)

And do we enjoy it? Who could fail to enjoy such an opportunity to spread the Gospel and in such a fun way, and among such an appreciative and impressionable audience?

Outreach? Think about it, get together and talk to your local school. If you don't have enough people who feel able to do this, why not do it jointly with another church? We also support another group working in a different school, with members drawn from the local Methodist, URC, Anglican and Catholic churches.

Br Ted Wilson
Gloucester

Synod was a humbling and overwhelming experience for me and I would like to thank people for their kindness and best wishes on my election as Bishop. I have valued the prayerful support of so many people throughout my service in the Church and I hope that that will continue in the months and years to come.

Another group of people who really deserve our prayers and support are the newly elected Provincial Board. They have the task of leading the Church into the future and of dealing with all the complexities not just of the worshipping body but also with company and charity

issues. There are property matters, personnel issues, financial details and more all to be dealt with on a day to day basis and speaking from experience at times it can seem difficult to get out from the trees to see the wood.

Many charity boards struggle with the fact that their boards are white, male and in late middle age. So recently there have been many moves in the charity world to try and increase the diversity of those on sit on their boards. That is thankfully not an issue for us because the diversity of our newly elected Board is a

reason for rejoicing. Women, men, black, white and younger members reflecting the diversity in our Church.

So please pray for our new Provincial Board and for the election for the other full time post that needs filling. Give thanks for all that they bring to the tasks ahead of them. It can be a lonely and thankless task at times but may they know God's blessing as they serve us.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Introducing the new Board Members...



Br Paul Holdsworth

Hello there. My name is Paul Holdsworth, a new non-stipendiary member of the PEC, and I have been asked to write a little about myself for the Messenger. I am originally from Lower Wyke and was educated at Fulneck School, followed by a Law Degree in Leicester. Were it not for

Leicester Tigers and my brothers and sisters at Leicester Moravian Church I might not have had the will to complete that degree! Br Victor Launder was a great inspiration as well and after a spell at York Law School I decided to offer myself for ministry in 1993. I was accepted for training and studied for a degree in Contextual Theology in Manchester and was then called as a student minister to Fulneck Moravian Church in 1998. The following year Patsy and I moved to London following my call to serve Fetter Lane and Harold Road congregations.

I was also ordained that year at Hornsey, by Br Joe Cooper and, after five and a half years we moved to Belfast, in answer to my call to serve Kilwarlin and University Road congregations. When Patsy completed her training I remained with University Road, whilst also taking up Cliftonville and Patsy began her ministry at Ballinderry and later also at Kilwarlin. After ten and a half years in the Emerald Isle Patsy and I were called to serve six congregations in the Western District, with Patsy serving Brockweir, Kingswood and Tytherton and me serving Bath Weston, Bath Coronation Avenue and Swindon congregations. And this is where we find ourselves today and so, as you can imagine, a call to become a non-stipendiary PEC member is a challenge, for sure. I can only pray that I am able to continue to serve our congregations in the west as a minister and our province as a member of the Provincial Board.

And so I would like to conclude by thanking the members of Synod 2018 for electing me to join this long heritage of brothers and sisters who have served this province for so many years. Please keep our new team in your prayers so that we can serve you and the Lord in the best way we can.

Br Paul M Holdsworth
Minister at Bath Weston, Bath Coronation Avenue and Swindon
Congregations



Br David Howarth

It seems customary these days that new members of the Provincial Board are asked to write something about themselves for the Moravian Messenger, however, I am fully aware that there will be some people in the Lancashire District who will read this who have known both my parents and maternal grandparents. My grandparents were members of the

Wheler Street congregation long before I was born, and so I followed in their footsteps and those of my mother in attending the Sunday School and in time becoming a member of the congregation.

Unlike many of my generation I did not lose a regular church connection, my mother making sure of that by arranging for me to have things to do. Sr Joan Howarth (née Walker), my mother, was one of the organists and she made sure that I would go to church with her and my father in plenty of time before the service began where I would help putting out hymn books and the hymn numbers on the board.

On reaching 21, I was elected to serve on the Church Committee, although once my term of office ended I graciously declined a further nomination. The following year I was elected and went on to serve until I offered for training for ministry.

Following four years of study and formation for ministry at Northern College, Manchester, I was called initially to serve at Fulneck and Gomersal before receiving a further call six months or so later to what was then Sparkhill United Church. Shortly afterwards, a call was issued to also serve at Leominster. I consider myself extremely lucky with these calls as my first in ministry, for the lessons learned and mistakes made have informed my ministry. Since then I have served at Leicester and Ockbrook, Hall Green United Community Church and Leominster and now at Baildon and Horton. Between the Synods of 2014 and 2016 I also served on the Provincial Board. I have enjoyed and been blessed in so many ways and by so many people.

From the very beginning of my training, and especially following ordination, I have drawn heavily on experiences gained earlier on in life. My CV is quite varied and shows that I have worked for the then Inland Revenue and within IT and product delivery for BUPA within their Corporate Insurance business.

I hope and pray that with the experiences gained, both within the church and secularly, will ensure that I am suitably equipped to serve on the Provincial Board once more. I see this, as with all aspects of church service as a joy and a privilege.

Br David Howarth
Minister at Baildon and Horton Congregations



Br Livingstone Thompson

I was born in the parish of Manchester, Jamaica, and grew up in the Bethabara Moravian Church, where I became a communicant member in my early teens. It was here at Bethabara that I sought and received candidature for the ordained ministry of the Moravian Church. After

completing an undergraduate theological degree and ministerial training in Jamaica, I served several circuits, including Lititz, Bethlehem and Springfield, where I was consecrated presbyter. While serving at Springfield, I was granted leave (in 1989) to study in Chicago, USA, where I completed a graduate degree in theology. From Springfield I was called to serve the Trinity Circuit in Kingston in 1991, where I remained until 1999. During the period 1993-1999 I was a member of the PEC in the Jamaica Province.

While pursuing postgraduate studies in Ireland, I also taught at the University of Dublin, Trinity College. After completing a PhD in theology and religion, I returned to Jamaica in 2003 and was elected President/Chair of the PEC. During that time I also served as Moravian tutor and lecturer at the United Theological College. After returning to the family in Ireland in 2005, I taught at the Church of Ireland Theological College, the University of Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin City University and the London Academy of Diplomacy.

In addition to the congregation ministry, I've been involved in human resource training for public and private firms and served on the Central Committee and Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. In 2015 I was accepted as a minister in to the British Province and currently serve Kilwarlin and University Road congregations and represent the Moravian Church on the Irish Council of Churches EU Affairs Committee.

Our family, Jean-Marie my wife and daughters Lesley-Ann, JoAnna, Jordana and grandson Jayden, crave your ongoing prayers.

Br Livingstone Thompson
Minister at Kilwarlin and University Road Congregations

The Moravian Church in Great Britain & Ireland

After Synod 2018, the following have been elected to serve as Provincial Elders:

- Sr Roberta Hoey (By Postal Ballot 2016 - 4 years Stipendiary);
- Sr Zoe Taylor (Synod 2016 - 4 years Non Stipendiary);
- Br David Howarth (Synod 2018 – 4 years Non Stipendiary);
- Br Livingstone Thompson (Synod 2018 – 4 years Non Stipendiary);
- Br Paul Holdsworth (Synod 2018 – 2 years Non Stipendiary)

The Provincial Board (PEC), in being elected, are thereby elected as Trustees of The Choir House, Fulneck School, Ockbrook School and the Moravian Union Incorporated which includes the Moravian Church, the Estates Property Portfolio and The British Mission Board in compliance with the Charity Commissioners.

In addition the Provincial Board act as Directors of the Moravian Union Incorporated as regulated by Companies House and each hold one share in the Company whilst in office. Br Paul Holdsworth has been appointed as Company Secretary.

The Unity Synod has entrusted oversight of the work of the Moravian Church in the South Asia Mission Province to The British Mission Board and has a close relationship with the Western Province of Tanzania as agreed by the Unity Mission Agencies. The British Province, through the British Mission Board, continues to have close links with and give support to The Elim Home, Star Mountain and Sikonge Hospital. This support is directed through the Unity Mission Agencies who have been entrusted with that responsibility by the Unity Synod.

The P.E.C. met to decide upon the divisions of responsibility; but it remains a collegiate body, with all decisions being the responsibility of the Board as a whole.

The Provincial Board

Chair	Sr R Hoey
Provincial Treasurer	Br L Thompson
British Mission Board	Sr R Hoey
Property matters	Br D Howarth
School matters	Sr Z Taylor

Members of PEC will attend the following Provincial Committees as appropriate:-

- Finance Committee
- Church Service Committee
- Faith & Order and Ecumenical Relations Committee
- Mission and Society Committee
- World Mission Committee
- Provincial Youth Committee



European Women's Conference in the Netherlands



Denksteinfeier: the Annual Celebration of June 17th at Herrnhut

June 17th is the founding day of Herrnhut. On June 17th in the year 1722, the Moravian carpenter Christian David cut the first tree to be used in the construction of a dwelling for a group of Protestant exiles from Moravia. Count Zinzendorf, who at that time was living in Dresden, had been gracious to offer shelter on his estate at Berthelsdorf. The centre of Berthelsdorf was a village, consisting mostly of farmers. The Moravians, however, were people of various crafts and trades. For this reason, Zinzendorf's administrator Johann Heitz decided that it would be better for them to settle near a local trading route so that they could sell their goods and engage in business. The result was the creation of a new town, for which Heitz suggested the name "Herrnhut" - "under the watch of the Lord." Ever since 1732, the event of the founding has been celebrated annually as a day of reflection and revival.

Nowadays the tradition is that every year on June 17th, members of the Moravian congregation and other citizens of Herrnhut gather at seven o'clock in the evening - rain or shine - in the yard behind the church, where they are welcomed by the ringing of a special historic bell. This bell has an amazing story. It belonged to the original 18th century church building and is inscribed with the words of a hymn by Count Zinzendorf: "May Herrnhut exist not any longer than as the hands of Christ are able to carry out their work without hindrance and love is our sacred bond." During WW II, the bell was confiscated for military purposes and soon thereafter, the church building and a large part of the town were destroyed. The bell, however, survived unharmed in a storage of scrap metal in Hamburg, and because it had the name "Herrnhut" inscribed, its origin could easily be identified and it was eventually returned. It is now hung in a bell tower constructed out of rubble on the foundations of the old walls of the first sanctuary. Only once a year it is rung, commemorating both the founding of Herrnhut in 1722 and its destruction in 1945 and reminding the members of the Moravian congregation of their spiritual calling.

A hymn and words of welcome by the pastor mark the opening of the ceremony, and then the brass band playing chorales leads the gathered assembly in a procession from the church to the historic Memorial Marker, which is placed in the forest at the spot where the first tree was felled on June 17th 1722. The marker was put into place in 1822 for the centennial celebration. It bears the inscription of words from Psalm 84: "Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God." It is said that Christian David and the Moravian exiles spoke these words to express their gratitude of having found a place of refuge.

Traditionally, the ceremony near the memorial marker includes the

reading of scripture, a short address, and a prayer. In some ways, it is a challenge for us as pastors to come up with a new and original message year after year. On the other hand, we have found that meditating on the words of Psalm 84 and the events of Herrnhut's founding in 1722 sometimes offers connections that bear a surprising relevancy for our own time. Two years ago, in July of 2016, our provincial board granted church asylum to a group of refugees from Iraq. It was a large Christian family from Mosul whose safety was threatened due to muddled legal circumstances. This step caused quite a bit of controversy, not only in the congregation, but also in the local media. Even after the asylum was ended (the family having officially received right of residence by the government), one national newspaper portrayed the Herrnhut Moravians as a case of pitiful do-gooders. Our message during the June 17th celebration was a different one, focusing on the story

of hope for all those who are persecuted for the sake of their faith. "Even the sparrow finds a home..."

At the end of the evening there is an informal party in the historic garden of Count Zinzendorf's Herrnhut manor. A men's choir sing folklore music, and beer and grilled sausages are sold. Not everyone stays for this part, but for some people this is really important. After all, the founding day is both a church and a civic celebration. Interestingly, the celebration of the founding day has

been kept even during the time of East German's socialist government, when June 17th had a specific political meaning. It was the day of the worker's uprising against Russian communism in 1953, which was always hushed up in East Germany. The only exception was Herrnhut, where the tradition of a religious procession unwittingly took on the air of political protest.

Now we are beginning to look toward 2022 when Herrnhut will commemorate the 300-year anniversary of its founding. This will certainly be an event of significance not only for the municipality of Herrnhut and our local congregation, but also for the Moravian Unity at large. Recently, the mayor has started the process of gathering ideas and suggestions, and we expect that before too long the outline for a calendar of events will become clear. Our hope, on the part of the Herrnhut Moravian congregation, is that many brothers and sisters from other provinces of the Unity will join us in this celebration in one way or another. Because the humble beginnings of Herrnhut are part of our common Moravian story, we hope that the anniversary commemorations may serve to strengthen the unity and mission of our church. We will keep you informed.

Br Peter Vogt, Herrnhut

Rev. Peter and Rev. Jill Vogt are co-pastors of the Herrnhut congregation



© Sr Margit Lessing

© Br Erdmann Carstens

I have been asked to share my experience of attending my first European Women's Conference ... so here goes. I travelled from Yorkshire with three other sisters and we were met at Amsterdam airport by a Dutch sister - so far so good - then the fun started trying to get many sisters to our Conference centre while there was a bus strike. I had a lift with a lovely Dutch couple and we went on the scenic and long route. We were staying near Zeist in a large house that had once been owned by a wealthy family as a summer residence to escape the hot, smelly summers in Amsterdam.

The days took on a set pattern of prayers, breakfast, bible study, lunch, activity groups, evening meal and prayers. I loved the breakfasts. On the first morning I was a bit confused by the little pots of chocolate sprinkles on the tables, I carefully watched my Dutch sister adding them to buttered bread, once tried I was hooked and they became a staple part of my diet.

The theme for the bible studies, 'Freedom in Christ', had been carefully chosen to coincide with the 155th anniversary of the end of slavery in Suriname; many of the Dutch sisters are of Surinamese heritage. The Bible study was led by Sr Jill Vogt, the minister from Herrnhut and was based on the Bible verse John 8:36. In this verse Jesus talks about being a slave to sin. I was

interested to hear that the original meaning of sin was to fall short of the mark. Sr Vogt also talked about sin as a break in the relationship with God. We split into smaller

discussion groups and I was blessed to have sisters from so many different counties in mine. Having sisters from the old eastern bloc counties added a different dimension to the discussions of freedom. These groups were special places where we felt safe to share stories and ideas which were at times difficult to hear about.

The most exciting activity was the Surinamese hat making workshop. Lots of laughter and super bright colours. Apparently, the slaves would communicate to one another in the way they arranged and wore their hats ... what messages were our sisters giving we wonder. Later that evening we also heard about how the traditional clothes worn in Suriname changed over time which was very interesting and was accompanied by a lot of music and dancing.

The highlight for many was the visit to the settlement of Zeist on Sunday. The



© Sr Elisabeth Hollindrake

settlement is on a very grand scale and the church is plain white and beautiful. We were treated to some wonderful singing by a Surinamese soloist during the service, but my abiding memory will be of the bright vibrant clothes worn to celebrate the end of slavery. Following the service

all the benches were taken outside where a very long table had been set out for our midday meal of Surinamese chicken and corn bread.

That evening we closed the conference with a service and by sharing the cup of covenant, always a special experience. A huge thank you was given to the planning team of Srs Wendy Hopcroft, Conchita Landbrugnd and Susanne Gartner. We sadly said goodbye to our old and new friends but with the wonders of Facebook we can keep in touch. I have now added the countries of Denmark, Estonia and Lithuania to my Facebook group!

This is just a snap shot of the many things we managed to cram into a short time, I would urge anyone interested in attending a Women's Conference to do so, it was a great time of spiritual renewal and growth, times to relax and plenty of fellowship.

Sr Elisabeth Hollindrake
Horton



© Sr Alison Raybould

Hall Green Ladies Craft Group: Stitch a Tree Project

In April, the craft group were proud to post 18 stitched trees to Manchester Metropolitan University Art Department. The Stitch a Tree project aims to connect individuals and communities in the UK in support of displaced

people around the world. Our trees will be combined with hundreds of others to make a large embroidery entitled 'Forest' which will be exhibited in Manchester and Winchester, raising awareness and funds.

The organisers say "Sewing is a powerful tool which acts as a common language across generations, cultures and diverse groups. By making a simple stitch, we create a strong shared message."

Surprisingly, many members of our craft group described ourselves as reluctant stitchers, but encouraged and supported by each other we had fun growing our trees. Some have learned new skills and others revived a hibernating pastime! As a church we have supported

individuals and families seeking asylum and this project gave us chance to reflect and remember people who have been displaced around the world and closer to us.

Trees remind us of roots, families, safety and shelter. Our trees had many inspirations: places, celebrations, memories, hope, peace, colour and seasons. Perhaps you can identify with one or more of the trees.

We know our crafts can make a difference, it is empowering to be part of another national activity, from an individual tree to a huge forest and #sharingthelove for our planet with our green hearts. We continue to make twiddlemuffs for people with dementia, and we're currently making six inch squares to make into blankets for homeless people.

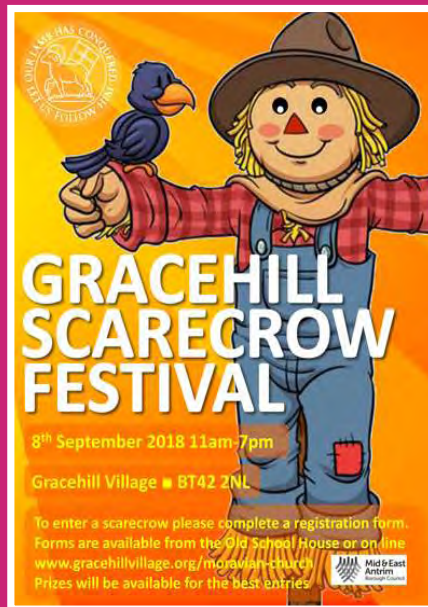
We meet on the second Saturday afternoon of each month. The craft group is a relaxing space in the month where we freely share inspiration, skills, stories, friendship and more. Collectively we plant seeds, encourage each other to form strong roots, branch out and blossom!

Sr Alison Raybould
Hall Green United Community Church

© Sr Elisabeth Hollindrake

Heritage open days

Gracehill



GRACEHILL SCARECROW FESTIVAL

8th September 2018 11am-7pm

Gracehill Village • BT42 2NL

To enter a scarecrow please complete a registration form. Forms are available from the Old School House or on line www.gracehillvillage.org/moravian-church. Prizes will be available for the best entries.

Fetter Lane

Once again, the Fetter Lane congregation will participate in Open House London on Saturday and Sunday, 22nd and 23rd September with Moravian Close open from 1pm to 5pm on each day. Open House started in 1992 to promote public appreciation of building design and architecture in the capital.

As well as giving an historical overview of the Moravians in London, past and present, visitors will learn about the site's evolution and special features including the renovation of the Tudor wall surrounding God's Acre and the restoration of the Gillick Pageant, a set of heraldic shields showing the ownership of the estate from Sir Thomas More in 1524 to Sir Hans Sloane in 1737. Sculptors Mary and Ernest Gillick lived and worked in the Close from 1914 to 1964.

Fetter Lane Moravian Church is located at 381 King's Road, London SW10 0LP. Please note that there is no parking inside the Close but pay and display can be found in the immediate area.

Lower Wyke

The congregation at Lower Wyke will again be open to visitors over the Heritage Open Days weekend on Saturday 8th September 10am to 4pm and on Sunday 9th September from noon to 4pm.

This year our theme will be the Yorkshire District with photo displays and information relating to the congregations in Yorkshire. The church registers will be available for anyone wishing to trace family history; walks around the settlement will be included together with displays of photographs and memorabilia of the life of the Lower Wyke congregation over the years. We welcome members of the Yorkshire congregations and anyone else who would like to visit us during the weekend.

Ballinderry

Ballinderry Moravian Church



Open from 10am - 4pm
Saturday 8th September

This year we celebrate the birth of John Cennick in 1718. He founded the congregation here and helped to build the first Church. That sadly was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt in 1835, but the new Church is still a classic example of a simple Moravian Church with minister's accommodation. The Church, Manse and beautiful garden are all listed. There is an exhibition in the Church about Moravian and local history and this year there is a special area devoted to a local soldier killed in World War One, the tragic centenary of its end that we will be marking this year.

Fulneck



Fulneck

'Peace at Last'

Peace time progress after WW1

SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2018 10am to 4pm

FREE ENTRY

REFRESHMENTS RECITALS ACTIVITIES

MUSEUM EXHIBITION DRAMA

GUIDED TOURS

www.fulneck.org.uk postcode LS28 8NT

Ockbrook



heritage open days

Come join us to see our heritage

Saturday 8th September 10am-4pm
& Sunday 9th September 12 - 4pm

Ockbrook Moravian Church

The Settlement, Ockbrook DE22 3RJ

Fairfield



FAIRFIELD MORAVIAN CHURCH, SETTLEMENT & MUSEUM, DROYLSDEN

Saturday 8 September 11am to 5pm
Sunday 9 September 1pm to 5pm

As seen on Great British Railway Journeys & Peaky Blinders Exhibitions ... Extraordinary Women, 1911 Census, Ring our bell - wind the clock, ... Tours, Museum, Stalls and Refreshments

Free Admission (All parking in Fairfield High School off Fairfield Avenue M43 6ED)

www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Kingswood



UNITED CHURCH KINGSWOOD (Moravian/Whitfield LHC)

Regent Street/Moravian Road, Kingswood

HERITAGE WEEKEND & FLOWER FESTIVAL 2018

Saturday 8th September 10am to 4pm
&
Sunday 9th September 2 to 4pm

Presenting some of Kingswood's long & varied history, from the King's Forest to the present day. With words, pictures, artefacts & floral displays.

Free entry Refreshments on sale

Donations invited for church funds

& Talk by Gary Best

Monday 10th September at 7.30 pm

Gary is a Methodist historian & current warden of the New Room in Bristol. He will talk about the four evangelists John Cennick George Whitfield and John & Charles Wesley who are such an important part of Kingswood's history.

Entry free

Tytherton



East Tytherton Heritage Project

The Moravian Church & Burial Ground, East Tytherton, Chappenhall, Wiltshire SN6 4JX

OPEN DAY

Saturday, 15th September, 10.00 am. to 5.00 pm.

Exhibition, guided tours, archaeology, working party ... Come and join in ... Free!

All ages welcome!

Making discoveries in a very special environment!

A prevention of a slave from Antigua, and a painting by a slave from Suriname

Parking is available. Contact Nigel Purnell, on Purnell@tytherton.org for details ...



Fulneck's 'Rope' team with award winning director Alacoque Marvin second right

Pudsey Theatre Group take the honours at Drama Festival

Pudsey-based theatre group, Fulneck Dramatic Society, more or less swept the board at the 2018 Wharfedale Festival of Theatre, their production of the Patrick Hamilton thriller 'Rope' collecting five awards.

The judges voted it 'Best Overall Production'; Alacoque Marvin collected the 'Best Director Award'; Angela Lambert (Best Supporting Actress); Paul Cullingford (Best Supporting Actor) and there was a 'Best Stage Presentation Award' for Dougie Brennan. Dougie was also back on the podium a few minutes later when his name was called out for the 'Spirit of Theatre Award', recognition for his hard work, craftsmanship and creativity as our lead set builder over the past 20 years.

The Wharfedale Festival of Theatre has been operating in its current format for over 18 years. It includes amateur theatre and operatic companies from around the West Riding as well as a highly popular youth and school's section. This year's competition had 30 entries. The Awards Ceremony was attended by well over 200 people and was held at Leeds West Academy.

A delighted Alacoque Marvin said: "Over the years Fulneck have been regular award winners, but to collect six in one evening is spectacular. Whilst the individual awards are great, the most important one in my view is the 'Best Overall Production', as this covers everyone involved in the production, both backstage and onstage. It's wonderful to be recognised in this way."

Dave Robbins
Fulneck

From Church House

Following Sr Sarah Groves election as Bishop at our recent Synod, we can now confirm that her consecration will take place on Friday 16th November 2018. It will be held at Gracehill in the Irish District and the service will begin at 7.00pm. We can also confirm that Sr Lorraine Shorten's consecration as Presbyter will be held at Hall Green in the Midlands District on Saturday 3rd November and the service will begin at 3.00pm.

We are sad to announce the death of Br Derrick Purnell who passed away peacefully in the early hours of Thursday, 23rd August at Oakham Cottage Hospital after a long battle with cancer. Please remember Anita, Jamie and Miranda and all the family in your prayers in the days ahead.

Provincial Diary for September

4-5 European Mission Conference, Zeist Br Paul Holdsworth
10-15 Unity Board meeting, Winston-Salem Sr Roberta Hoey
25-26 PEC Meeting
29 YDC Meeting, Gomersal



© Br Michael Newman

Wellbeing at Gomersal

Back at the beginning of 2012, Sr Victoria Wright came to me with an idea. She wanted to run a monthly event where we would focus on people's wellbeing. So, we made plans, and that April we had our first 'Wellbeing Wednesday'. The morning started with a short walk around Little Gomersal, which was followed by refreshments, and then a yoga session followed by some meditation. After a time, this developed so that the meditation was held on a different Wednesday followed by a 'Cup of Hope' coffee morning. For the meditation, we joined the Julian Meetings network and use some of their resources.

More recently, Victoria and I went to an event run by Kirklees Council called 'Spirit in Mind', which linked faith groups and health organisations. This led to a talk at the church by our local mental health trust which reinforced the benefits of what we were already doing, as well as encouraging us to try some new activities. So, through Kirklees Council, we both went on a 'Walking for Health' training day, and we had our first Gomersal health walk in May this year. We have now had three of these walks and the numbers have grown each time. We also started a monthly carpet bowls session with equipment borrowed from the Council, and this, too, has proved very popular.

We now have a wellbeing event every Wednesday morning. On the first Wednesday of the month it is the health walk. On the second Wednesday is the Julian Meeting. On the third Wednesday is the original 'Wellbeing Wednesday'. On the fourth Wednesday is carpet bowls. Many of our members attend, as well as husbands, friends, and others who hear about what we are doing through our connections in the local community. It is great to see our multi-purpose church building being used regularly, and from next year we are planning to have a Wellbeing Sunday when we have a special service and invite everyone who is involved in our activities.

The driving force behind all these things has been Victoria. The congregation has also supported everything that we have done. I am grateful to them all for stepping out, both in faith, and physically!

Br Michael Newman

Minister at Fulneck and Gomersal Congregations

6-9	Heritage Open Days (www.heritageopendays.org.uk/)
9	Education Sunday (https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/296912/Home/Resources/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday_2018/Education_Sunday_2018.aspx)
	Rosh Hashana - Jewish
12	Muharram/Islamic New Year - Muslim
13-16	Heritage Open Days (www.heritageopendays.org.uk/)
16-22	World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel (www.worldweekforpeace.org)
19	Yom Kippur - Jewish
21	UN International Day of Peace (www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/)
23	Autumn Equinox
24-30	Sukkot - Jewish

Dates to remember!

From the Sanctuary

Sitting beside a village pond in the Peak District, the following reflection emerged:

Once upon a time, there lived a Freshwater Bass, called Todd. His home was a large pond at the side of a village green. All day long, he would swim happily with his friends in the murky waters. In swimming, he built up his strength. Sometimes, people would come to the pond and throw him food. He would see their silhouette against the sky as he looked up. Because of his strength as a swimmer, on occasion, one of the challenges that his friends would dare him to perform was to swim so fast to the surface of the pond to see how high he could jump - and Todd enjoyed these challenges.

In taking part in several of these challenges, Todd noticed, on jumping, a world that was full of wide open space,

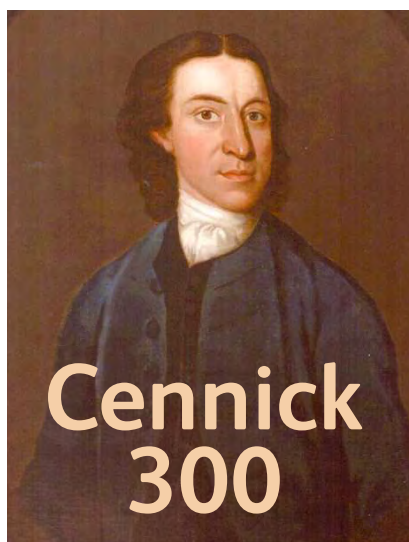
sunshine, and green fields. There were buttercups in the field, and ducks at rest nearby. People were walking their dogs and children played. It was a world that seemed very different to his own world in the pond; and it seemed so much better than his world. More and more, Todd began to get restless and to think, "I am tired of just swimming around in this murky pond all day. I have explored all that there is to explore here. I am growing tired of my friends who just do the same thing each day. I am ready to move on and do something different. Whenever I jump, I see such a wonderful world - a world that seems open and exciting, waiting to be explored".

So, one day, without telling anyone, Todd took an almighty leap out of the pond and landed on the grass. At first, he felt the warmth of the sun on his scales - he experienced the freedom that he had

seen on his jumps. However, it wasn't long before he was struggling to breathe. Rather than feeling free, he felt trapped as he slowly suffocated. The shape of his fins meant that it took a huge effort to flap around on the grass. Being outside of his pond wasn't such a wonderful place after all. So, with one almighty effort, he finally got himself to the edge of the pond and slid in, only to be greeted by his worried mother and friends who chastised him, saying, "You are such a silly bass, Todd!"

Perhaps, sometimes, rather than wishing things were different, we have to look for God's purpose and blessings in the situation in which we are. Yet, at other times, we need to leave the familiarity of our comfort zone to discover a new perspective on God's presence and intention for us in our familiar circumstances.

Br Peter Gubi,
Dukinfield



Join us for the first weekend in November in Ballymena and Gracehill, Co Antrim to celebrate the 300th Anniversary of the birth of John Cennick in 1718.

The weekend starts with a lecture at the Town Hall on Friday 2nd November by Gary Best, Warden of Wesley's Chapel in Bristol on the life and work of John Cennick. On Saturday there is a guided coach tour of significant places of Cennick's work in the North of Ireland and in the evening a lecture on Cennick's theology given by Rev Dr Bob Cotter.

On Sunday it is Gracehill's Church Anniversary and the preacher is Gary Best and following the service is lunch in the Church Hall.

For more information and to book a place on the weekend please phone Rev Sarah Groves on 128 256 53141 or contact her on sarah.groves@moravian.org.uk

The weekend is kindly sponsored by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

The Moravian Messenger

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

Advertisements and all communications concerning distribution and supply should be sent to the Editorial Team.

Editorial Team, Church House, 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TJ
editorialteam@moravian.org.uk
Contributions for the Messenger should reach the editorial team by the 7th day of the preceding month.

Design & Artwork
David Bull
dave@redragdesign.co.uk

Printed & Distribution
G. R. Walkden
Tel 01253 681338