

# moravian messenger

FEBRUARY 2019



## New Lease of Life for Malmesbury Church

We often lament about having to sell our old buildings and in most cases they are changed into residential houses. After many years of neglect the Church at Malmesbury has been given a new lease of life other than as a private home. The building was sold in 1997 but has had very little done to it until it was on the market again a few years ago. Local people formed a committee to raise funds to restore it from its neglected state to become the Julia and Hans Rausing Building and part of Malmesbury's Athelstan Museum.

Julia and Hans Rausing, who live in the Chelsea area, funded the purchase and the committee were able to obtain a grant of £30,000 from Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the garden, make a disabled access and purchase display equipment. The conversion work was mainly paid for by generous donations they received from many organisations and individuals, in particular, the Vale Action group.

A religious society was formed in Malmesbury in 1742 and a malt house belonging to Thomas Lyne was converted into a chapel. The Malmesbury society



© Melissa Cole

was put under the care of the Moravians when John Cennick handed over his societies to the Brethren in 1745. Members of the Malmesbury society were incorporated into the Wiltshire congregation when it was settled on 9th May 1748. A new chapel was built and opened by Br La Trobe on 4th November 1770. A gallery was erected in the chapel in 1787, and the chapel was enlarged in 1831. Malmesbury settled as a separate congregation in 1826. The chapel was almost entirely rebuilt and enlarged to double the size of the old one and was re-opened on 9th October 1859. The Church was sold in 1997 and the church hall modernised as a place for the congregation to continue with their worship. After a proposal at Synod was passed, the congregation was finally closed on 5th October 2008 and the three remaining members transferred to Tytherton.

During the renovation the pulpit was removed and is held in storage awaiting restoration. Under the pulpit a well was found and if you look at the picture you will see that this has been made a feature of the building. The structure of the well was made safe with a glass dome in the floor which displays this surprising discovery. It's a great talking point as you can still see the water beneath the old chapel.

The renovations have been done to a very high standard, managing to retain the integrity and original features of the building, and the Moravian history is recorded on a plaque inside the building. A local sculptor, Melissa Cole, was commissioned to make a sculpture for the premises, and an advent star has been erected outside in front of the old chapel. Although this looks very modern it does not detract from our traditional

*Continues inside on page 16*



**Love Your Selfie**

(page 15)



**Three months  
in Nepal**

(page 17)



**Congregation News  
- Gracehill**

(pages 18)



**Congregation News  
- Wellhouse**

(page 22)



# Defining Poverty



With the Christmas and New Year rush now well and truly over, two resolutions from our Synod last July deserve our attention and work in 2019. There were two resolutions about Child Poverty in the UK and one resolution about reducing the use of 'single use' plastics in our churches.

The issue of child poverty is one that concerns many of our members but what has become apparent is that people mean different things by the word poverty. Generally, there are two definitions of poverty, that of Relative Low Income or Relative Poverty and Absolute Low Income or Absolute Poverty. So, it is important to be clear in our discussions about what we mean.

Relative Poverty affects those people who live in households who have an income of less than 60% of the median income in that year. It should be noted that the median income is not the same as the average income or average salary. I have found it difficult to get either the average or the median income figure for any particular year. Because this is a relative figure there will always be some people living with a relative low income to others in the community.

Absolute Poverty is measured relative to a fixed standard of living, rather than the rest of the population and is defined in comparison to the median income in 2010/11. Therefore, those living in Absolute Poverty are living in households who have a lower household income than 60% of the median household income in 2010/2011.

Using these measures, it indicates that one in six people in the UK are in relative poverty. However, if you also take housing costs into account in these calculations then the number of people in Relative Poverty in the UK rises to one in five. This is because housing costs form a higher proportion of expenditure for people on low incomes than for those on higher incomes. I personally believe it is important to use figures that take housing costs into account because this is more realistic to people's actual experience. So, in the year 2016/2017 there were 30% or 4.1 million children in Relative Poverty and in the same year there were 3.5 million children in Absolute Poverty and this figure has been falling slightly over recent years.

However, the paper on 'Poverty in the House of Commons Library - April 2018', predicts that the proportion of children in Relative Poverty is expected to rise sharply over the coming years from 30% to 37% in 2021/22. The proportion of children in Absolute Poverty is predicted to rise from 27% to 31% in 2021/22.

Part of this is due to the changes in the benefit system that have been coming in recently as families on low incomes draw a higher percentage of their income from the benefits

system and tax credits than do families on higher incomes. In particular, the introduction of the two-child limit in tax credits and Universal Credit will affect those households with three or more children.

Poverty, whether absolute or relative, happens through a number of reasons: low wages in employment, unstable or erratic employment, relationship breakups, high housing costs, high fuel costs, unemployment for various reasons including illness and lack of good childcare, inadequate benefit levels being paid to families, debt and sometimes because of inadequate parenting.

Poverty does not just mean less money to live on, it can mean a reduction in life chances for those who live in poverty. For example, poor educational achievements in childhood is the main driver that causes poor children to remain poor adults. Low household income levels mean that many of the things that we often take for granted are unattainable or a rare treat. Further low-income levels, poverty, may exacerbate other issues within the family such as poor parental mental health, problem debt or drug and alcohol dependency and relationship breakdowns.

Many of us have children and grandchildren and nieces and nephews and we want the best for the children we love and know. What we want for them should be what we want for all children: a loving family, recognising that families do come in different shapes and sizes, decent secure accommodation to live in, enough food to eat, good schools to attend, proper access to information technology and safe areas and times to play.

The Moravian Church cannot end child poverty, but we can tell our elected representatives and the wider world that this issue matters to us. The Church is not a political party nor should it appear to be allied to one political point of view. There are practicing Christians and people of good will in all the main stream political parties. What we can do is to raise the issue generally and then discuss it without slogans, support charities that help families and most importantly, ask all politicians to make the welfare of children the highest priority when they are setting policies for tax, benefits and employment, housing and various social policies. They need to reflect on the fact that the policies they have adopted over recent years will cause levels of both relative and absolute child poverty to rise again in our land over the next few years. I don't want that for my grandchildren or for any other children!

**Sr Sarah Groves**

*Information taken from the "House of Commons Library: Briefing Paper: Number 7096, 31 August 2018: Poverty in the UK: statistics", by Feargal McGuinness.*

## Love Your Selfie

Irish District Youth Weekend October 2018



© Sr Sarah Groves

This years Irish District Youth Weekend started out, as many have previously, with a great bunch of young people and leaders gathering together to celebrate fun, friendship and faith. The weekend was held at Gracehill Moravian Church Hall and the theme centred around 'Love Your Neighbour as Much as You Love Your Selfie'. This came out of Matthew's Gospel 22:37-40 and we encouraged our young people to love one another. We had 12 young people and four leaders over the weekend.

Friday night consisted of getting to know each other through games and snacks and a few rounds of 'Werewolf' provided by Gracehill's own Owen Johnston. When it was dark, the young people played 'Find It' and several outdoor games and the evening was topped off with sparklers and hot chocolate.

Saturday started off with a trip to the Sports Hut for a session of football, rugby and some track games on the indoor pitch which was great fun. Then after stopping for a quick snack and drink it was Laser Tag. Not sure who enjoyed this more, the leaders or the young people! After such an active morning it was time to head back to Gracehill and have lunch,

'make your own sandwiches' crisps and chocolate. Free time followed before a short walk to Galgorm led by Br Peter Dunn to raid the local shop for tuck and to play football on the local playing fields.

Back at Gracehill the young people then got ready for the Bible Study led by Br Jared Stephens who had his first taste of the tradition that is 'Irish District Youth Weekends'. The Bible Study focused on the theme for the weekend. The craft activity was led by Sr Deborah Armstrong. The young people decorated a picture frame with stickers glitter and lots of PVA glue to represent their own likes and personality. Everyone was given one of the group pictures we had taken together to represent the love we have for each other and these were put it into the picture frames. There was a bit more free time and the option to do some baking led by Sr Hannah Carmichael.

Make your own Pizza was the cue for dinner and it was great to watch the young people individualise their own creations. After dinner the youth weekenders said good bye to Br Jared as he had Sunday service to prepare for, but they then welcomed Br Stuart Walker who brought renewed energy to the

evening. Games around the Gracehill Village Square were followed by toasting marshmallows and eating them with chocolate digestives, smores! Worship preparation followed for Gracehill's Sunday service and the evening was topped off by watching 'The Greatest Showman' as part of the theme of loving your neighbours.

Sunday morning started well with a continental breakfast and then pack up and tidy. The young people took part in the first section of the service with a modern-day twist on the Bible verse, sharing the best bits from the weekend and some prayers written by the young people. After the morning worship the young people joined together for one last lunch. There was just enough time to squeeze in several games of 'Werewolf' before finally saying goodbye to old and new friends. The youth weekend was a great success and great thanks are due to all the young people who attended and to everyone who helped out or provided support.

**Sr Debby Armstrong**  
Gracehill



## Christmas Celebration - Lutheran and Moravian Church Albania



© Kisha Luterane e Moraviane, Shqipëri

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As the new year approaches, we would gladly like to inform you about our Christmas service in Tirana and meetings of our other groups in the Lutheran and Moravian Church in Albania. Christmas was held separately in Tirana, Bathore, Burrel, Elbasan and Pogradec.

In Tirana we were about 50 people celebrating the birth of Christ on December 24th, gathered in worship and bonded in love. Filled by the Holy Spirit, the service went really well, and all people participated in a time shared in Jesus Name. Especially this year our aim was to engage other members in sharing the Word, which was a blessing because people were involved and happy.

In the love and peace of Christ, we wish you hereby a blessed 2019, filled with love, peace, joy and laughter.

Blessings and Wishing you all a blessed New Year!

In the name of all leaders and members of our Church.

**Elona**

*Kisha Luterane e Moraviane, Shqipëri  
Lutheran and Moravian Church in Albania*



## New Lease of Life for Malmesbury Church

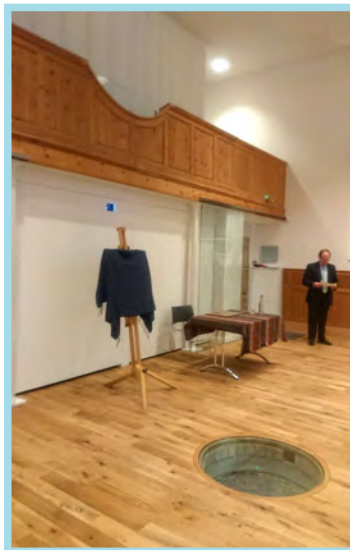


© Athelstan Museum

advent stars and is another way in which the committee wanted to keep the property's Moravian history alive.

The building was officially opened on 14th December by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall. This was a wonderful evening where all the people who were involved with the purchase and renovation were presented to Her Royal Highness and I was very honoured to represent the Moravian Church.

As a church I think we need to make a special thank you to Mrs Angela Sykes, the Secretary of the Friends of Athelstan Museum (FOAM). Angela worked hard over the last few years through various setbacks to ensure that this project went ahead with an aim to retain some of the Moravian heritage in the building's new



© Sr Gillian Taylor

making workshop that was held there at the beginning of January.

**Sr Gillian Taylor**  
Dukinfield

## Moravian Star Inspired Sculpture for the new Julia & Hans Rausing Building in Malmesbury

This sculpture was commissioned by Angela Sykes and the team organising the renovation of the former Moravian Church in Malmesbury, a new community accessible building and extension of the Athelstan Museum. The organisers were familiar with my sculptural work and asked me to consider making something for the site.

I was contacted in the summer of 2017 about the potential for a piece of public sculpture to celebrate and recognise the history and change of use of this lovely old landmark building in Malmesbury in North Wiltshire - my home town. I knew when I saw the site what I would like to make and researching the history of the Moravian Church really helped formalise my ideas.

I was asked to identify a location for the sculpture and immediately wanted to use the space between the two beautiful arched stained-glass windows to the roadside of the building - I also wanted people to look up at these windows as they passed the building so the height of the work was critical.

Plenty of people in the town are familiar with my Dad, Hector Cole MBE, as he taught them metal work or technical drawing at Malmesbury School from the late 1960s to 1990s. I thought it was a great chance for me to play homage to him and his historical forged weaponry influence on me as well as create a stunning sculpture that reflected the history of the building.

My sculptural work is known for being flowing and curvy; sensuous lines in steel that take the viewers who encounter my sculptures on a journey. For this sculpture I decided to go in a different direction and take the form of the Moravian Star as the basis for my work - studying the geometric possibilities of making a steel sculpture that had the 26 points of a true Moravian star structure. From this starting point I let my design develop and deconstructed the star shape while considering my blacksmithing techniques as the main means of making the work.



© Melissa Cole

The finished sculpture has a certain Medieval-weaponry feel to it while also taking the form of a Moravian Star based on a dodecahedron central structure - this element to the sculpture is what gives it a light delicate feel - and when you stand underneath it and look up through it you can see the complex structure inside.

Using different forged tapered sections in the star; from flat bars hot-split or fire welded to angle iron forged to a taper, the light plays on the surfaces at different angles and will change the dimensions of the work as the light changes. I was aiming for a sculpture that had substance and presence yet had a delicate and light feel to it and feel that the work is doing just that with a modern etched zinc grey finish with a dash of 24ct gold to take your eye up and away in the sky.

The sculpture has been part of a much bigger fundraising effort by the organisers of the renovation and restoration project of the old Moravian Church. I would like to thank Angela and William Sykes for being confident in my ability to create a sculpture for the space and the Athelstan Museum Team for working with me on the commissioning process.

This project has been a big effort and for those who like to know how long it took, I spent 71 hours on design, consultation and making a scale model and 151 hours were spent making the large-scale sculpture, forging, cleaning, assembling, fabrication and finishing. It weighs 53kgs and sits on a specially cut piece of Bath stone.

I would also like to thank:

- Morgan Scoble-Rees my current workshop assistant and forger of long tapers!
- ACNurden builders for their help installing the work [www.nurden.ac/construction/](http://www.nurden.ac/construction/)
- Wells Masonry for supplying a gorgeous piece of Bath stone [www.wells-group.co.uk](http://www.wells-group.co.uk)
- [www.athelstanmuseum.org.uk](http://www.athelstanmuseum.org.uk)

**Melissa Cole**  
[www.melissacole.co.uk](http://www.melissacole.co.uk)



## Three months in Nepal



© Br Phill Batelle

Sometimes in life the right opportunities come along at exactly the right times and when it does we have to know to say YES. For some years I have had a yearning to explore our Unity in more depth and for whatever reason, Nepal has always stuck out in my mind. In the middle of 2018, during a conversation with a great friend, I was informed about a school that the Moravian Church is linked with in Kathmandu. The school was looking for someone to build them a simple website and as well as this there would be the opportunity to be part of life within the three Moravian churches.

it's very much a contrast of historic and new, old and young, traditionalism and modernism as you look up to see a western style shopping centre towering over a bustling street of shops, barbers and roadside motorcycle repairs.

To a visitor the pace of life here can seem chaotic at times but if you tune into it you soon start to see there is a rhythm or understanding between everyone. If you drive on the roads you do need 360° vision to keep an eye out for motorcyclists on both sides of your vehicle or even roaming cattle and dogs.

The Nepali people are extremely welcoming and hospitable. Not only did I get the chance to share food and fellowship with church and school families or groups, there were also many times I was caught in conversations

with shopkeepers, in eateries or just with people on the street. This also included joining in with a lot of the local traditional or Hindu celebrations and meet ups at times too as my guest house manager would often greet me upon my return home from school by saying "Hey brother, what are you doing this evening?"

For my day to day 'work' I was involved where I could help out in and around the school. The school is currently split between two large houses that have been repurposed into classrooms and an outdoor play area. One building contains the Toddlers, Nursery, Lower Kindergarten and Upper Kindergarten classes whilst the other currently houses Grades 1-3. The school continues to grow each year as a new grade is developed so the current oldest grade can move up. The problem faced currently is that the buildings are starting to become too small to house the ever-increasing numbers of grades as well as the retention and

growth the school enjoys as its name becomes synonymous with quality education and care.

During the time here, I was privileged to be part of some of the grade classes visits and events. These included a visit to the local produce market to buy fruits and vegetables for their school market day where the children sold their goods to parents and family. There was also the field trip to the local horse-riding stables which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone; kids and teachers alike! But one of the best days we had was the School sports day. After a few practice sessions for parade and introducing a few games, the day became a wonderful spectacle of the kids' efforts all rewarded with fun and medals.

As well as the school, I was also regularly involved in what the three churches were doing. Not only were there the regular Saturday services (starting at 7.30am) but also youth, mens and womens fellowships. On top of this, during the week a team of pastors and lay preachers go to various locations to offer house fellowships with people in their own homes. On public holidays, special programme days are offered to bring the three congregations together and, like any successful Moravian event, they are full of friendship, food and music.

During my three months, I saw, experienced and was taught so much. More than I could ever try to get down on paper. I would highly encourage anyone to consider exploring and building more links and fellowships with this great part of our Unity, especially while the British Mission Board is closely linked. My personal thanks go to everyone I met, to 'Auntie and Uncle', the school, the American Moravian visitors who came to Nepal while I was there and to everyone who wished me well, supported me or helped me while I was away. If you want to know more I wrote a day by day blog which you can see at: [nepalphil.blogspot.com](http://nepalphil.blogspot.com) or feel free to contact me.

**Br Phill Batelle**  
Ockbrook



© Br Phill Batelle

"Wow. That sounds fantastic!" I thought and so after some brief communication with the couple I would be meeting out there, I booked my ticket in the middle of September and a week later headed out to Nepal for a three month trip. The flight was surprisingly shorter than anticipated at only seven hours and I was soon meeting the two people I would very soon caring come to know as: Auntie and Uncle.

September in Nepal is the end of the monsoon season heading into the 'winter' time. However, the cold climates here do not appear until near the end of November. My first month and a half were hot with temperatures easily reaching 30°C every day! Kathmandu is a large, dusty but developing metropolis. After the 2015 earthquake, some areas have gone into overdrive rebuilding and introducing newly developed buildings where old ones used to stand. At times



# Gracehill



© Sr Sarah Groves

Over the past two to three years anyone looking for Br Anderson Weir could usually find him working quietly and patiently in the peace of the Burial Ground, tidying, cleaning and trimming around headstones, in memory of all who are buried there. So many visitors from all over the world come to visit Gracehill searching for the burial place of long forgotten relatives, yet no Burial Ground Plan existed. In the winter of 2017 Br Weir was approached and eagerly agreed to try and formulate the existing information into a Burial Ground Plan. What a task! Using the earliest Burial Register he could find, and with the help of Sr Roberta Thompson, Br Weir drew up by hand a detailed plan of every burial place. This plan is the one now used to record every new burial, and to date there are now 1,552 recorded on the plan! This led to Anderson writing up his research, so with the help of his wife Sally, work began to produce what would become a truly fascinating booklet to be used for generations to come. Sadly Sally passed away before it was completed, but Anderson continued the work to have it finished in Sally's memory. On the 2nd November, with the whole family present, the Burial Ground Plan book, meticulous and coloured reference charts and the booklets were dedicated to God in loving memory of Sally - a precious work of love that will live on in Gracehill.

On the 16th October 1968 Br Desmond Quaite was ordained, going on to serve in Ballinderry and Kilwarlin Churches as a student Minister. Following his ordination he served in Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Jamaica, and then as a District Minister in the Irish District. Br Desmond has continued to serve

# Ballinderry

A large congregation joined together on the 11th November to remember the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War - apparently the war to end all wars. Br Wilson conducted the service and asked how often we do 'remember them' and posted the question how valid is our remembrance if it is confined to a few minutes once a year. In a similar vein he asked how valid is our witness if it is merely proclaimed once a week at a Sunday morning service. There is a direct connection between all the young men who died and the sacrifice our Lord made for us. In the evening members and friends joined together to ring the church bell as part of a national celebration. Our youngest participant started the ringing and this finally finished the tribute. Strangely the bell at Ballinderry bears the name of Vickers of Sheffield, one of the major munitions makers in both world wars.

We said goodbye to Sr Sarah Groves on the 18th November when congregation, family and friends joined together for her final service at Ballinderry as our minister. The congregation presented her with a gift as a mark of thanks for all her work on our behalf. It should be noted that Sr Groves arrived at our congregation as a minister and left as a Bishop. Other ministers might take note.

The MWA held a very successful coffee morning and sale at the beginning of the month with many locals joining us. This was good to see as we are endeavouring to raise our profile and

Br Desmond Quaite with Bishop Foy



the church and only recently stepped down from taking services. At church on Sunday 14th October 2018 he was



Desmond and Lily Quaite with the 50th Anniversary cake  
© Sr Sarah Groves

surprised to see some wonderful photographs on the screens and a special cake to mark the occasion.

Over the years nine Bishops have served in Gracehill but only Sr Sarah has been consecrated here. So on the 16th November, in the presence of her family, friends, bishops and representatives from the Worldwide Unity, invited clergy and guests from other denominations and numerous friends from the Irish District and beyond, in a packed church Sr Sarah was consecrated the 370th Bishop of the Unitas Fratrum. To mark this historic and joyous event, Sr Roberta Thompson paid a warm and heartfelt

tribute to her, offering our support and prayers for the journey ahead. Br Kitson then presented her with a beautifully bound and inscribed Reference Bible as a token of love and good wishes to both Sarah and Chris for the way ahead. It is already being put to great use at the Monday Bible Study Meetings!

**Sr Roberta Gray**

work in the village and surrounding area.

Our new Minister Br Jared Stephens led the start of our Christmas celebrations when he welcomed the children from the local primary school for our first service in December. We have a close association with the school and a large turnout appreciated the joyful welcome the children's singing and music brought to the start of the Christmas services. The participation of members and friends made the familiar service of 'lessons and carols' enjoyable for all and a guest preacher, Br Ralph Patterson, who has led services for us during the year, led the worship on the 16th. A Baptist lay-reader, he manfully worked his way through some carols not very well known to him! In the evening Br Stephens introduced a new service to our Christmas series under the title 'Blue Christmas' - it was designed to provide 'a quiet, safe space where we invite the Prince of Peace to speak peace to our hearts.' This seemed very appropriate when we consider the state of the world today. 4pm saw a packed church enjoy a real Moravian Christingle service with many visitors from the village joining the regular congregation. Christmas morning was celebrated and Br Stephens finished 2018 with a service on the last Sunday of the month combining carols and hymns. His message was that Christ was born at Christmas and 'love came down at Christmas' and intertwining that we should remember all year.

**Sr Anne Wilson**

# Fetter Lane

The Christmas season at Fetter Lane was especially memorable this year. At Christingle we welcomed more children than ever (just a few are pictured here) as well as finding out about two new babies in our congregation. Our new minister, Claire Maxwell and her husband Steve said hello to a baby girl in mid-December and N'sane Flemmings and his wife Jeun were blessed with a third daughter, sister to Naima and Eloise, arriving on the evening of the Christingle service itself. Girls seem to be a theme at Fetter Lane!

Thanks to Sr Naomi Hancock for leading our Christingle service which was brought to life by her knitted nativity figures.



© Br Andre Flemmings

Continuing the Christmas season, our service on 30th December was led by Br Herbert Daly and became the first of our new 5th Sunday song services with many familiar carols and hymns. Br Edwin Quildan was welcomed back on 6th January for our first service of the New Year with Lovefeast and Holy Communion.

With Sr Claire on maternity leave, we will be sharing the responsibilities for services and welcoming visiting ministers in 2019. Our challenge now as a congregation is to take the hopeful message of Christmas into our daily lives throughout the year.

Happy New Year from all of us.

**Sr Cynthia Dize**

# Fulneck

All this year's special services for Christmas have been rewarding, enjoyable and well-attended starting with the Advent Sunday Communion through to the Watch Night service.

On 16th December was the Junior Church Nativity and Toy service. Congregation members were encouraged to participate in 'The Great Journey' by being given actions to perform and wearing costumes of a character in the story. This year's carol singing round the settlement on Thursday 20th began at Oakdene Close and finished at the Bankhouse Inn two hours later. The singers made a joyful, melodious sound. The Christingles were made on Saturday 22nd and the service of Nine Lessons and Carols was held at 7pm on Sunday 23rd followed by fellowship over mulled wine and mince pies. On Christmas Eve the Christingle Service began at 6pm and was rewarding and entertaining. Christmas Day Worship and the Watchnight Service rounded off the celebrations and festivities.

The social side of Christmas began as early as mid-November with a morning Christmas Fair and in the afternoon a Junior Church Light Party with games, crafts, fun and stories. On 7th December the Museum Committee hosted a Christmas Cracker Evening. A Christmas quiz was followed by a three course meal, entertainment of music and carols by Rachel and Brigitte, members of a ceilidh band. The evening came to a close by the giving out of raffle prizes.

On 12th December Fulneck School welcomed settlement residents to Christmas dinner in the school and games afterwards in the Boys' Brigade building. On Friday 21st it was Fulneck's Christmas Party with a buffet meal, games, musical entertainment and a raffle with prizes given by a surprising and hilarious Santa Claus.



© P D Ingham

**Br David Ingham**

# Cliftonville

On the first Sunday in Advent, the Christmas tree, Advent wreath and Star and the Nativity scene were in place for the Christmas season. Later in the month a table was available for the Christmas card exchange and purchase of the Watchwords for 2019.

Our thanks to Br Mark Kernohan for leading the Christingle Service on 23rd December, when the congregation included a number of past Sunday scholars with children and/or grandchildren, including Marie Haddock, nee Stringer, from South Africa with her daughter and two grandsons who were born there. We also thank Demi and Leah for reading the lessons. The carols and a short video also told of the birth of Christ, and the smiling faces of the children as they processed around the church expressed the continuing appeal of the Christingles.



Demi and Leah in three generation group

© Br John Cooper

After an early start and a service at Ballinderry, Br Jared Stephens arrived for the Christmas morning service in Cliftonville. Afterwards he and Elaine joined us for a cup of coffee and a short time of Moravian fellowship. Br John Cooper led a Service of Lessons and Carols on the 29th December and the lessons were read by members of the congregation.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Sr Clarissa Johnson in Jamaica on 15th December. During her time as a nurse in Belfast she attended services in Cliftonville and is still remembered with affection by members of the congregation.

**Sr Edna Cooper**



## Kilwarlin

At the beginning of a new year we are happy to reflect on a successful season at Kilwarlin. The church was open in September for the European Heritage Open Day, at which there was an interesting and informative display in the church hall. We are happy to report the number of people attending this year was greater than in previous years. We also held a very successful Country and Gospel Concert in Hillsborough Village Hall organised by Br Billy Haire. As usual the Sunday School children gave a lovely presentation of the Nativity both in words and in song at the Christingle Service. The church was full of family and friends who love to attend.



© Sr Montana Law

In the coming year readers who know Kilwarlin will be interested in what is happening, our grounds are being restored with help from the Heritage Lottery Fund. We have the only 'Battle Garden' in Ireland. Tree surgeons have begun clearing the undergrowth and cutting back trees to reveal flower beds in the shape of Greek letters, a pond and what was once a sun house. Hopefully by next year we will have a beautiful garden for all to visit.



© Sr Esther Law

**Sr Esther Law**

## Gomersal

On Sunday 11th November, about 65 members of the 7th Spen Valley Scout Group joined us for our Armistice Day service marking the one hundred years since the end of the first world war.

It was a very moving service, led by Br Bob Hopcroft. The scout group were impeccable, as usual, and a credit to their leaders.

The pathway leading to the Church and the Church itself were both decorated with around 700 knitted poppies, along with the names and ages of all the men from Gomersal that were killed during that war. Many people remarked on what a touching tribute and wonderful display greeted them as they arrived for the service.

**Sr Norma Machell**



© Br Les Machell

## Leominster

Members of Leominster Moravian Church have had a very busy few months.

We held a MacMillan coffee morning on 28th September in the hall: there was a good turn out and we raised £200.

On Saturday 6th October we held a Jumble sale in the Moravian church hall and thanks to the generosity of the local people we raised over £300 for the organ fund.

A celebration service for John Cennick was held on 25th November. Cennick preached in Leominster in 1749 and the towns people were so impressed with him and the Moravian church they asked to build their own chapel. Leominster Moravian Church opened in 1760, unfortunately Cennick died before he could see the fruit of his work.

Also on 25th November, Sr Dilys Howard represented us at the presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service by the Dowager Countess of Darnley, Her Majesty's Lord



Coffee morning

© Sr Lorraine Shorten

Lieutenant of Herefordshire to Vennture. The event was a church service held at Holy Trinity Church, Whitecross in Hereford and included two songs by a choir and stories from volunteers. Sue Jones, who sometimes preaches for us and volunteers for Vennture kindly gave her a lift. Vennture takes its name from the Venns who ran a charity to help the needy. From 2012, street pastors have been patrolling the night time streets of Herefordshire where necessary, and now have Ambassadors on the day time streets, which they have extended to Leominster. They also have family pastors and youth volunteers in a group called 'Lean on Me'. All are given training and Vennture works closely with the churches, police, A & E and social workers.

The Moravian Busy Fingers knitting club held a stall in the Victorian market on Saturday 8th December. Although it was bitterly cold the local folk did us proud - so a big thank you to everyone for their support.

We welcomed friends and family both local and further afield at our Christingle service on 16th December. Our minster led a fun service which included re-telling the Nativity story through chocolate!

**Srs Dulcie Scott and Dilys Howard**

## Lower Wyke

2018 was another busy year at Lower Wyke. The congregation are getting older but the activities show no sign of lessening or slowing down. Sr Dixon continues to inspire us with her services Sunday by Sunday and we have welcomed Srs Hopcroft, Woolford and Cooper and Brn Howarth, Kernohan, Evans and Hopcroft to conduct special services and fill the pulpit in the absence of Sr Dixon. The monthly café Church is always a well attended service, some of the themes having been YPMA, discipleship, Spring, homelessness, promises, Father's Day, Summer Camp past and present and Toy Service. The Art Exhibition in May is always a good time to meet up with friends, enjoy refreshments and appreciate the talent of local artists.

Our regular annual Summer events, benefiting from the beautiful weather, were all extremely successful. The Scarecrow Festival, once more wonderfully supported by the local schools and community, transformed the quiet hamlet as happy family groups excitedly commented on the vast array of scarecrows ranging from nursery rhyme characters to cultural figures such as the winning entry Van Gogh!!

Many of the same families returned to test their skill on a selection of outdoor games at the Strawberry Fair and to share in the delicious afternoon teas served along side bowls of fresh strawberries and cream.

Proms in the Paddock has been held for ten years and in 2018 all attending enjoyed the warmth of a true summer evening whilst listening to the band and soloist Michelle Walker. There cannot be a better setting for the flag waving finale even in London!!



© Sr Jane Dixon

'Bacon Butties' and an interest in books combined to attract a room full of people in October and the Craft Fair in November was another chance to meet up with friends old and new. A record number of hot meals were served and, of course, there was the opportunity to buy gifts, stocking fillers and home made items in readiness for Christmas.

The Wyke food bank is extremely well supported by the congregation who generously give food, time and talents and several members are involved with other ecumenical activities including monthly prayer meetings.

As Christmas approached the Community Lunch celebrated with a special meal and Greenfingers once more hosted a workshop, this year, making Christmas table centre pieces. The results were worthy of adorning any royal Christmas table!! The Belleplates played at the Christmas Gathering when hot pork sandwiches, cake, mince pies and mulled wine were enjoyed with a background of festive fun and carol singing.

As in most of our churches the Christingle Service was the highlight of the Christmas celebrations. A packed church shared in prayers and carols as the young people acted the nativity story. The entry of the trays of lit Christingles into a darkened church is always a special moment. This year, Lucy Thornton aged twelve, played Silent Night as a solo on her grandfather's cornet and the congregation joined in - something her grandfather did in years gone by.

As we start 2019 we hope that peace, good health and happiness will travel with you, from all at Lower Wyke.

**Sr Diane Thornton**

## Royton

2018 didn't start very well - Br Martin Smith was ill - but through this difficult period we were so grateful to the brothers and sisters who so willingly helped us. We are part of the 'Royton Churches Together'. On Good Friday we joined with the local churches in Royton Precinct for an open-air service and on Whit Sunday along with St. Pauls and Trinity Methodists and following a lovely Brass Band we joined in the annual 'Walk of Witness'. In April we were invited to Dukinfield for a District Retreat, a most interesting day. The M.W.A. Sisters met with sisters from Salem and Dukinfield for a very warm sisterly joint meeting, in May. The 3rd 'District Moravian Gathering' was held at Fairfield in June and a good number from Royton enjoyed this fulfilling day of Fellowship.

We have limited space for social events - the Christmas Fair is always well attended and we do very well and are grateful for all the help we receive from families and friends. We find 'food' is a big attraction: afternoon teas, strawberry teas,



Beetle and Bingo with potato pie, 'International Meals', not forgetting the soup kitchen - all go down very well.

celebrated the anniversary of the ending of W.W.1. We have two Rolls of Honour, one from Westwood and one from Healds Green Methodists, which sadly had to close, but four

sisters and a brother joined our Congregation. Prints of these memorials were on display in the church along with other memorials, all very carefully arranged. During the service candles were lit for each young man who died and crosses with names on were placed in the church garden. In the hall there was an exhibition of photos, books, personal memoirs, posters etc.

Christmas 2018 was the first for Br Martin at Royton. The Christingle was as always, a lovely service with so many friends and family and on the last Sunday we shared the service with sisters and brothers from Salem.

**Sr Anne Geary**



# Wellhouse

They say change is as good as a rest, and November was certainly a month of change: we had to change our bonfire from the 3rd to the 10th and it proved to be the best attended ever, avoiding as it did all the other local bonfires. We estimated about 300 plus enjoyed the wonderful firework display and the equally enjoyable bonfire fare. Hard work but rewarding, both socially and financially.

Later in the month we had to change our Annual Christmas Fair from the 17th to the 24th and again we enjoyed a good day. There was a good array of stalls and a good variety of goods to purchase, lunches of Turkey Casserole in a Yorkshire Pudding and a variety of sandwiches and cakes were available. The day was a resounding success with the final profit total exceeding last year's. It was good to meet up again with old friends who support the occasion.

On the 1st of December we held our newly entitled Christmas Supper, but to our regulars it was still the Men's Supper, where, for about the last 43 years the men of the congregation have served the gathering with the supper of cold meats and salad followed by apple pie and cream. Over the years the men have relied on the ladies to make the apple pies for us and increasingly we now rely on the ladies to help prepare and this year to serve as well because we were down to two men. Our after dinner speaker, Keith Whiteley shared his experience of writing and producing pantomimes; for those of us present who had been involved with Lower Wyke pantomimes written and produced Sr Sheila Clough it brought back many happy and fond memories and for Sr Clough I'm sure some of the frustrations, but we could laugh as we thought back to those happy times.

On Tuesday 4th the ladies held their carol service led by Sr Jane. This was followed by a faith tea and friends from around the church were invited to come along and it was an enjoyable afternoon with gifts from Sr Betty Hooper.

We held a Blue Christmas Service on 9th December in conjunction with Churches Together in Mirfield. It was a reflective service acknowledging that this time of year is difficult for people who may have experienced a loss or difficult circumstances. The service was well received.

Our service of nine lessons with carols was held on 16th December, a service of participation and reflection as we relive the age old story of our Saviour's birth.

We met at 3.30pm on Sunday 23rd for our Christingle service, which included a display by the Katie Philpott School of Dance, with 'White Christmas', 'Waltz of the Flowers' and



© Sr Jane Dixon

'It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas' being performed by junior tap, senior ballet and junior ballet. The Christmas story was told in the form of a 'No Rehearsal Nativity' where young people volunteered to dress up in the afternoon. It worked well and everyone enjoyed it. The Christingles were distributed and we then sang Silent Night in total darkness save for the lights from the tree, the crib and the Advent Star and of course the lights of 100 Christingles.



© Sr Jane Dixon



© Sr Jane Dixon

On Christmas morning we held our service to remember and celebrate our Saviour's birth.

Over the last few months we as a Church have been investigating the possibility of siting a defibrillator on the outside of the Church wall so that it will be of use to those in the church building, the local community and those passing through on their way to and from the local school.

Eventually it has been achieved and this last week we got the defibrillator operational. We held an open evening hosted by the Yorkshire Ambulance Service to inform the local community etc. of its existence and how it could help to save lives in an emergency. We felt it was one way the Church could help serve the community without asking for their help.

We have had a very busy couple of months, but a very enjoyable and rewarding time, and as a congregation we thank Sr Jane for all the time and effort she has put in to prepare for and lead our activities.

**Br Kenneth Evans**

# Swindon

Our Christingle service was a lively service, involving all the children and young people. Four of our young people presented



© Sr Sandy Mundy

a puppet show, written by Br Paul Holdsworth. The children performed an impromptu Nativity during the Bible readings. Our brass ensemble provided the music and Paul reminded us of the meaning of the Christingle. Always a lovely service and wonderful to see so many people joining us, some for the first time and many friends and neighbours returning.

**Sr Sandy Mundy**

# Salem

It seems a long time since I last wrote, but with an elderly congregation we do not have many events, except for the monthly coffee mornings, which are still going strong. In December it coincided with John Cennick's birth so we organised a display and invited local people who live on and around Cennick Close, which is behind the church. We had several visitors who were interested in the history. We are still not sure why it was named, but assume that it was in 1968, the 250th anniversary of his birth.

We were sorry when Sr Irene Brierley died on 9th November, after a long illness. Earlier this year Br Harold Brierley told us that he had been Church Treasurer for 60 years. Is this a record for a Moravian congregation?

The Christmas Fair managed to raise about £800, with help

from Br Stuart Brierley's Traidcraft stall, but it may well be the last, as we are running out of able-bodied members to run it. Br Martin Smith had to dash back from attending Sr Sarah Grove's consecration, but we were glad that he did.

The Anniversary Service the following day was led by Bishop Joachim Kreusel, and we enjoyed the service and welcoming him to Salem over coffee afterwards.

We were very glad that Br Martin was with us this Christmas, and I think he enjoyed learning about a Moravian Christmas. The Nine Lessons and Carols Service was well attended, now that we have moved the time to 3.30pm. The Christingle Service also was well attended, however, it was disappointing that there were no young children at the service.

**Sr Anne Broadbent**

# Ockbrook

Br Fred Linyard celebrating his 90th birthday on 13th December, cutting a cake at Ockbrook on Sunday morning. We sang Happy Birthday to him during the service and wished him many happy returns of the day!

**Sr Julie Hague**



© Br Joachim Kreusel



Christingle service on Christmas Eve

© Sr Alishba Khan

## From Church House

We are pleased to announce that Sr Jane Dixon's consecration as Presbyter will take place at 3pm on Saturday 16th March at Lower Wyke. We hope that many of you will be able to join us to be with Sr Dixon for this special occasion.

### Provincial Diary for February

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Membership and Assessment        | PEC          |
| 7-8 PEC, Church House              |              |
| 15-16 ECP/British Province Retreat |              |
| 26 CSC, Church House               | Roberta Hoey |

## Congregational Register

### Marriages

8th Dec 2018 Stephen Brown and Joanne Hare Gomersal

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 3                 | Poverty Action Sunday<br>( <a href="http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday">www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday</a> ) |
| 5                 | Chinese New Year  |
| 8                 | Day for Victims of Trafficking  |
| 11                | World Day for the Sick  |
| 14                | Valentine's Day   |
| 25 Feb - 10 March | Fairtrade Fortnight<br>( <a href="http://www.fairtrade.org.uk">www.fairtrade.org.uk</a> )                           |

*Dates to remember!*



# From the Sanctuary

Have you ever noticed in this country, that often when you visit parish churches or rural churches, you have to enter them through the Lych Gate (i.e. the 'death gate'). Then you walk through the beautiful and peaceful burial (or consecrated) ground in order to enter the sanctuary and prayerful presence of the church - the house of God?

Also, in many traditional Moravian Churches on the European continent, placed centrally between the two entry doors (one for brothers and one for sisters) is the 'dead house' (sometimes known as a 'corpse house' or 'mort house') where the coffin sits during a funeral. Traditionally, coffins are not brought into the service as they are in this country (presumably, at one time, to minimise the spread of infection); rather, they remain in a separate 'dead house' before being taken into 'God's Acre' for burial after the funeral. Indeed, what is now the main entrance to Fulneck Church was once a traditional 'dead house', but it has been converted into an entrance to the Church, alongside the traditional brothers' and sisters' entrances.

Both of these 'designs' of church (the Lych Gate and the Dead House) contain a deliberate theology. They are a reminder that we all have to journey through death before we can enter the ultimate sanctuary of God. They also symbolically portray a theology that life and death are part of the same continuum (a juxtaposition), and we, as Christians need to journey (or live our life) in a way that doesn't deny the reality of death, but instead sees life as a preparation for death, and as a journey of hope for the life which is to come.

Death is indeed all around us, but comes more into our vision when we hear of atrocities being committed near to where we live; or may know someone who is ill with a life-threatening issue, or we may ourselves be terminally ill. Death (or its potential) brings into

focus the vulnerability of life. I have sometimes felt despondent and helpless in the face of this reality, in spite of my faith.

However, I am also reminded that our faith requires of us that we hold the reality of death, and the fragility of our life, in mind - always; and that we see death, not as something to dread, but as a gateway to hope and to a wonderful life with God. I am grateful for modern science, and the miracle of medicine, that keeps those known to me with us for longer than they might have been in times past. However, I am also grateful for the reminder of the vulnerability of life that their suffering puts me in touch with; for being alongside others in their struggle, and being in the struggle of ill-health ourselves, can help us determine more clearly what is important in life - and the importance of our faith - and thus how we can live our lives, and the time we have left, better, without losing the hope which comes from our faith.

**Br Peter Gubi,**  
*Dukinfield*

## British Mission Board News

### Wupperthal Mission Station - Fire Disaster Appeal

On 30th December a fire devastated the Wupperthal Mission Station in South Africa. Over 50 homes and shops were destroyed, including the boarding school, local clinic, town hall, church shop, manse and the mission museum, leaving at least 200 people homeless and the telecommunications infrastructure destroyed. Much of the roofing in the village was thatched. However, the church is still standing so has been made available for people who need a place to stay. Recovery efforts are ongoing as emergency services have been working around the clock to assist victims and there are appeals for immediate support.

The electricity, water, sewage and internet

supply has now been restored, but the families have agreed to demolish the remains of their homes and there are tents and makeshift toilets available. The church cooperative, Red Cedar, which produces rooibos body products, also lost their building, leaving several people jobless until further notice.

The Rhenish Mission Society established Wupperthal in 1830 and it was taken over by the Moravian Mission Society in 1965. It is still under the administration of the Moravian Church today.

Please remember everyone affected by this disaster in your prayers. The PEC in the British Province encourage any congregations or individuals who wish to support our brothers and sisters in Wupperthal to send donations through

Church House. If your congregation has a collection or you receive cash donations, can your treasurer please forward this on by cheque or bank transfer to Church House.

By sending the money through Church House, we can forward the money collectively to the South African Province, and individuals will not incur bank charges on international transactions.

We will keep you updated as recovery operations continue. A short video that illustrates the severe impact of the fire on the village can be found at:  
[www.facebook.com/CapeArgus/videos/344835672909304/](http://www.facebook.com/CapeArgus/videos/344835672909304/).

Thank you.

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**Editorial Team**, Church House, 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TJ  
[editorialteam@moravian.org.uk](mailto:editorialteam@moravian.org.uk)  
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**Design & Artwork**  
**David Bull**  
[dave@redragdesign.co.uk](mailto:dave@redragdesign.co.uk)

**Printed & Distribution**  
**G. R. Walkden**  
Tel 01253 681338