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Unity Youth Committee in Tanzania

In January of 2019, I was invited to partake in the Unity Youth Committee meeting taking place in Tabora, Tanzania. The journey was at times long but the trip was eye-opening, educational and productive.

Unfortunately our trip began with a delay due to Amsterdam airport closing on the day of our travel. This caused Georgie and me, the new Unity Youth Desk Coordinator from the Czech Province, to arrive into Dar es Salaam almost a day late. We had some catching up to do in order to meet up with our fellow committee members in Tabora but it did give us chance to explore some of the city we had arrived into.

Dar es Salaam is a hot, busy, and much like some places I've visited recently, developing city. New buildings and areas of the city sit aside older and more established parts like the fish market. People from all walks of life can be found here and tourism is a large and growing

part of its makeup. Due to our itinerary change, we stayed in Dar for the evening before a very early flight North to Mwanza where we were met and driven six hours south to Tabora (Tanzania is a very big country!). Eventually we managed to catch up with our fellow committee members; David from South Africa, William from Tanzania and Dr Bøytler from the ECP. Unfortunately we were missing two members; Sacha from the Caribbean and Angelica from North America who couldn't make the journey but they were kept in touch via Whatsapp and email messages.

The Unity Youth Committee was established just a few years ago by request of the Unity Board. It seeks to support, encourage and develop youth work across our Unity as well as the sharing of news, ideas and connections between the different regions. Each region is represented by a delegate and meetings take place every two years in different parts of the Unity. Over the

course of two days we discussed various topics and looked at what we wanted to achieve as a committee. One of our main discussions and targets was the preliminary plans and dates for the next Unity Youth Heritage tour in 2022. This tour will offer two delegates from each Province (aged 22 to 35) the opportunity to explore the life and styles of the Moravian Church in Tanzania. Hopefully, using experience from the previous tour and feedback from delegates we can make this an exceptional trip! So keep your eyes peeled for more information...

Once our meetings had completed we were taken on a tour of some mission stations and churches. These all varied in size and distance from each other but every single one greeted us warmly and offered us songs, dance, prayers and a chance to introduce and bring greetings from our regions. It was amazing to hear and see how much the church is a part of the communities here. Some of the congregations had actually well outgrown

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Seeking Our Unity

I have just returned from my first 'Bishop's Meeting'. It is a bilateral annual meeting between the bishops in the Continental Province and the British Province. It was a respectful and reflective meeting where the bishops shared and discussed a number of matters. One of the major themes that occurred was what does unity in the Moravian Church really mean in practice. The official name of the Church is the Unitas Fratrum, the Unity of the Brethren, our doctrinal statement is called 'The Ground of the Unity', our motto calls for unity through love even in diversity and we refer to the world-wide Moravian Church as 'The Unity'. So, Unity is a core understanding of who we are, what we do and believe and how we understand ourselves.

However, the bishops wondered if that were still so in an increasingly diverse world. How can we call what we have unity when members in the Moravian Church do not share a common language or a common liturgy. What does unity mean when we come from very different cultural backgrounds and these backgrounds affect how we interpret matters of sexuality; when we have different understandings of what bishops can and should do; when the historic heartlands of the Moravian Church are in a minority and don't always agree with younger provinces. This is not the first time I have heard people question what is it that makes us Moravians, what is our distinguishing world-wide feature.

For me Pentecost on 9th June gives a hint. This day recalls and celebrates the Day of Pentecost recounted in the Bible in the Acts of the Apostles. On this day the Holy Spirit descended on the believers, gathered in a house in Jerusalem, in signs of flames of fire and the sound of the blowing wind. Pentecost was a Jewish festival and members of the Jewish diaspora from across the Roman empire had gathered in Jerusalem to mark the festival.

The Holy Spirit seems to have filled the believers with praise. As they left the security of the house the people in the streets heard the believers' voices in the language of the colonies that they had come from. *Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7*

Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues! 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?' Acts 2:5-12

Reflecting on the passage you can also see how it is in some way a reversal of the story of the tower of Babel. In this ancient story in Genesis the people all have a common language which is then confused by God because they have striven to reach the heavens. Now in the miracle of Pentecost the languages don't become the same but they are understood by others. I see Pentecost as a wonderful vision of unity in diversity. The languages and national identities of the hearers on the streets in Jerusalem remain but they all have the opportunity to understand the good news of Jesus.

But all too soon the gift of the language being in common disappeared and men and women had to go back to struggling with difference in language, culture and viewpoint and this can be traced in the writings in the New Testament.

Sometimes we need to realise that nothing this side of heaven is perfect and it is part of the path of discipleship to strive towards what we profess and not to assume that we have it already. For me the genius of the unity that we profess as Moravians is relational. That when we meet Moravians from other places we recognise that we have much in common.

A document about the current mission of the Moravian Church, approved at the Unity Mission Conference in Cape Town speaks about this. 'Through our Lord and Saviour we are bound together in a fellowship of love and forgiveness. Our Unity does not mean agreement in all things, but it does mean a willingness to love one another, care for one another, and pray for one another.' Then 'our Unity is a powerful witness to the world ...'

May this unity be found in our families, our congregations and in the world-wide Unity so the we can all in our different ways do the work of Christ in this world.



Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team

SUMMER CAMP 2019



When: 3-10th August 2019

Where: Dovedale House, Ilam

For: Young people aged 10-17 with links to the Moravian Church

Cost: £340

More information and booking forms can be obtained from your minister or Joy Raynor at: youth@moravian.org.uk

Information about the venue can be found at www.dovedalehouse.org

Booking before 31st May is recommended as we need to have a minimum number for camp to happen.

Can you help Summer Camp?

We want to share your expertise with the young people at camp so if you have a skill you would be able to share and teach, whether it is origami, hockey, dance, music or building Lego models, please get in touch with me if you are willing to come along to camp. Meals provided and we can give you a bed for the night if you need it. Email youth@moravian.org.uk or phone Joy on 01753 553549.

We are also looking for your financial support for camp. The fees only cover the basics and in order to make camp the best ever we need additional funds to pay for outing, materials and equipment. Please donate either by cheque payable to Moravian Union Inc or by BACS payment to CAF BANK Ltd, The Moravian Union, Account 00023436, Sort code 40 52 40, and labelled 'SC Donation'. It is helpful if you let Joy know you have made a donation. Examples of the expenses you could contribute to are; an activity, £18 for an hour and a half per person, a day ticket to the theme park £22, coach fees for the week £800, pack of sparklers £12.95, bag of marshmallows £1. Many thanks.

Joy Raynor

Once upon a time ...



Some of the artwork of Paula Flöter

© Sr Laura Wood



More storytelling in the Church

© Sr Laura Wood



Sr Lorraine Shorten telling us the story of Creation using Godly Play

© Sr Laura Wood

Storytelling and the art of writing and telling a good story is always a skill I have admired greatly. I am always in awe of the storytellers of this world who make this complex art form appear very easy.

This March I was lucky enough to be invited to the Moravian European Youth Conference. This is an international conference held by the Moravian Church for anyone who works or volunteers with children, youth and families and has a connection with the Moravian Church. The theme this year was storytelling. At the previous year's conference, those gathered had begun to create a story book to tell the history of the Moravian Church and its development across the world.

We met in Berlin. On arrival I was greeted warmly by our hosts at Berlin central station. Soon, we headed to Checkpoint Charlie to find our accommodation and to meet everybody. Eleven of us had gathered for this conference, from across Europe: the Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic and the UK. Some of the people living and working in the Netherlands were also from Suriname, so the sense of this being a global gathering was felt deeply.

We spent time together hearing about one another's work, the different projects and approaches to ministry that connects with young people and their families. There was a commonality that most practitioners had strong links with local schools, some even worked in Moravian schools, but all saw work in schools as a necessity to engage with the local community and families. I found it interesting that one person was currently employed as both a youth worker in a school and a social worker. There was a sense that the remit of youth worker didn't quite fully explain all the work that is involved in working with families and the different needs and dynamics that is unique to each family. His role was soon to be merged into one job title of youth worker, but he was keeping some of the aspects of the social worker role in his new remit.

Storytelling, and how to convey a story to people of all ages, was a topic that was discussed at length, across the different languages when it came to bringing the story book, beautifully written last year to life. We chose to focus on making this book for ages 4-6 years but with the awareness that it has to connect with the adults, who will sit and read this book to the children. The key thing was to work on the graphics and to create a flow throughout the story. The talented artist Paula Flöter came and showed us her work. She stunned us with the level of detail in her drawing; something that would entrance children and be something an adult would engage with because of the beauty of her designs. We were happy to commission her to go and take our ideas and make them into the beautiful artwork to accompany our simple wording.

The book will hopefully help show the history of the Moravian Church through a main character (I won't give this bit away) and this character will visit different places across the world to see what is happening and to learn more about the story of the Moravian Church. Every country at the conference spent time working on individual pages, but we also spent a lot of time together to create a style and a flow that we felt fitted our target audience.

I came away from this conference inspired by the creativity that I had been surrounded by all weekend. It left me thinking about storytelling once more and how the strategies used at this conference could be applied to my role as Family Project Leader. In the future I want to remember to always ask: who is best to tell this story? How do we ensure the story is well received? Is the story part of a wider narrative and if so, who reading or hearing this story would or wouldn't be aware of it? All of us are storytellers as all of us have stories to tell. Yet the skill comes in the delivery and that is something this conference amplified for me.

Sr Laura Wood
PYCC

(Provincial Youth and Children's Committee)

Irish Council of Churches

The Irish Council of Churches held its Annual General Meeting on 4th April at Lurgan. The Moravian Church was represented by Br Jared Stephens and Sr Sarah Groves from the Irish District and Br Philip Cooper, our Ecumenical Officer.

The Moravian Church has a proud record of ecumenical involvement in Ireland as a founder member of the ICC and of Christian Aid Ireland. The Irish Council of Churches brings together most Protestant denominations across Ireland so they can confer and work together and consult with the Catholic Church through the Inter Church Meeting. At this year's ICC AGM there was the business of reports and accounts.' The key note address was given by Professor John Barry of Queen's University, Belfast. He spoke passionately about the need for urgent action to address the issue of climate change. His focus was not so much on changing technologies as on the positive benefits of living more simply in communities that focused on mutual support. He particularly praised the example of the

Swedish school girl Greta Thunberg and pointed out that we are robbing our children and grandchildren of their future. Moravian's are deeply embedded in the life of the ICC with Br Mark Kernohan, Chair of the Irish District attending all the regular executive meetings and also serving on the committee that has looked at the treatment of victims of 'The Troubles', and talks trying to get Stormont, our Legislative Assembly, functioning again. Sr Janet Wray from Gracehill has served on the working party looking at homelessness; Janet is the CEO of Housing Rights in Northern Ireland. Br Livingstone Thompson has served for the past three years on the European Affairs Committee and over Easter my April editorial for the Moravian Messenger was published on the ICC blog.

It is wonderful that, as a small church, we can contribute so much to the wider Christian work in Ireland, north and south.

Sr Sarah Groves
Minister at Gracehill Congregation

Unity Youth Committee in Tanzania

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their original buildings and so we were also lucky to be shown the developments they were making building new churches.

Sunday was our last day in Tabora and so we were welcomed into the church to share in their service. The church was packed full of people and the service was a collection of traditional hymns, readings, etc. plus dancing groups and choirs. Dr Bøytler gave the sermon in Swahili (he spent a few years here and so is fluent in the language). Georgie and I took the opportunity to sit amongst the congregation and take in a different view of proceedings. Following the service we were taken to Sikonge, which was our next stopover, and given a tour of the Moravian hospital, the Bible College and some historical sights.

Monday was an early start at 5am as we began the next leg of our trip to Mbeya. This drive would take 12 hours along bumpy, unpathed roads. Although dark at first, the sun soon rose giving us views of the expansive Tanzanian countryside and a very surprise sight of a group of giraffes crossing the road in front of us. Every so often we would make our way through a town full of people going about their daily lives, living and working in small businesses and shops. Signs of their community lives clearly evident from where we sat in the car as well as some quick glimpses of the Lamb and Flag here



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and there ...

Mbeya is another large city although much cooler than Dar es Salaam. We were taken to the Bible School to meet with some local youth church members. During food and fellowship we had the chance to chat to them about life in the church, what they do as youth and what they are looking to do in the future. It also gave us our first real chance as a committee to introduce ourselves and what we were planning to do. After thanks and prayers we departed back to our hotel for some rest ahead of our final big day.

Our last day saw us touring the mission station in Rungwe. One of the oldest stations here; they hold an impressive collection of photographs and documents from the history of the area. The scenery and atmosphere are fascinating - it must be quite a wonderful

place to live. As we are given the tour we meet one of the women's groups who are busy tending to the gardens and greet us heartily. The tour continues from here further up the road where the church is renting out its acres of land to a separately established company. The company, using mostly man-power, grows, cultivates and produces avocados on a huge scale; not only for local markets but also for export worldwide. It's inspiring to witness the church making full use of its assets coupled with a close connection to their values and ethos.

If you are interested in youth work and news that is happening around the Unity or wish to know more about the Unity Youth Committee and any events that are being planned; head over to the Facebook page: facebook.com/worldwidemcyouth

Br Phill Battelle
Ockbrook

3 The Collapsing Creation

The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants,
For they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes,
Broken the everlasting covenant, Isaiah 24.5.

There are many terrifying scenes in the Bible where the whole creation collapses. The best known are the horrors when the seals are opened in Revelation 6.1-17. These echo the words of Jesus to his disciples during Holy Week, when he was sitting with four disciples on the Mount of Olives, looking across at the corrupt but splendid temple which they all knew was supposed to represent the creation, Mark 13.1-37.

In Revelation, the horrors are false messiahs, war, famine, death, martyrdom and finally the collapse of the creation in earthquake and darkness. Jeremiah saw the creation returned to its original chaos, before the Spirit moved over the waters and God created, Genesis 1.1-2.

**I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
And to the heavens, and they had no light.
I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking,
And all the hills move to and fro.
I looked, and lo, there was no man,
And all the birds of the air had fled.
I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the Lord, before his fierce anger,
Jeremiah 4.23-26.**

The words 'waste and void' are the same as in Genesis 1.2.

Jeremiah saw all the work of the Creator destroyed. Why? The prophet said it was because people abused knowledge.

**For my people are foolish, they know me not;
They are stupid children, they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil, but how to do good they know not, Jeremiah 4.22.**

This theme runs all through the Bible, from the story of Eden, where the human pair chose the tree of knowledge of good and evil rather than the tree of life which gave them wisdom, to Jesus' promise that the faithful would eat again from the tree of life and thus be fed by its wisdom, Revelation 2.7.

Proverbs describes wisdom as the tree of life, in sharp contrast to the other tree that brought barren soil, pain and death.

**Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her,
Those who hold her fast are called happy,
Proverbs 3.17-18.**

We shall return to this in article 7 of this series.

Isaiah saw the earth mourning:

**The earth mourns and withers,
The world languishes and withers,
The heavens languish together with the earth.
The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants,
For they have transgressed the law,
Violated the statutes,
Broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt.**

**Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched,
And few men are left, Isaiah 24.4-6.**

Isaiah, Jeremiah, St John and Jesus himself were describing the broken covenant. When the bonds of the covenant of creation were broken by human sin, everything collapsed. There was chaos, darkness, deserts and no sounds of life: 'the birds had fled'.

When Rachel Carson published her book 'Silent Spring' in 1963, she alerted a wider public to what people were doing to the earth. There was no more birdsong in the fictional small town in America that she described. 'No witchcraft, no enemy action, had silenced the rebirth of life in this stricken world; the people had done it to themselves.'

The temple teachers in Jerusalem were all too aware of what happened when human sin broke the covenant of creation. Sin destroyed everything, not just the world of nature but human society as well. Each year they performed a ritual of cleansing and healing which they called 'atonement', to restore the broken covenant bonds. This is one of the most misrepresented teachings in the Bible. Atonement is not about appeasing an angry God, it is about cleaning up the mess caused by our sins and thus healing and restoring.

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest took blood, which represented life, into the Holy of holies, which represented the heart of the creation and the presence of God. Then the blood was sprinkled in the temple which represented the creation, 'to cleanse and hallow it from the pollutions of the people of Israel', Leviticus 16.19. To be included within the ritual of atonement, the sinner had to repent of his/her actions and do everything possible to make amends. The ritual confirmed and sealed what had already been done. The verse in Leviticus describes the earliest days of the ritual, in the desert tabernacle, but it continued until the time of Jesus.

St Paul applied this ritual to our Christian lives, saying that we should each be a living atonement sacrifice, and bring about healing by our different and sacrificial way of thinking, our wisdom.

**I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind ...
Romans 12.1-2.**

**May the mind of Christ my Saviour,
Live in me from day to day,
By his love and power controlling
All I do and say.**



Dr Margaret Barker
Methodist Preacher and Theologian

Poverty and Health

The word 'poverty' has become a controversial one, for while the Oxford dictionary definition is simple enough - 'The state of being inferior in quality or insufficient in amount' - the outworking of the concept and what constitutes actual poverty is extremely sensitive and often goes to the core of political belief and ethos. This holds true at a local, national and international level. Clearly the consequence of poverty may affect people's lives in many ways, particularly in relation to lifestyle, education and health.

There have been many attempts at defining the concept of health but Dietrich Bonhoeffer simply yet comprehensively claimed it was 'the strength to be'¹. In other words, health can be seen as 'the ability to flourish without being unduly impeded by illness or disability or, if necessary, by overcoming illness or disability.'²

The topic of 'Poverty and Health' has filled numerous volumes going back to the early nineteenth century and in trying to present a succinct contemporary overview reference will be made to two recent books which are well worth reading to gain a deeper appreciation of this complex topic.

'Factfulness'³, the international best seller by the renowned physician and statistician, Hans Rosling aims to give a more fact-based view of the world and challenges old prejudices in favour of a global and historical view. Rosling demonstrates that audiences all over the world consistently overestimate poverty in the world (the majority of the world live in middle income countries) and underestimate both life expectancy (the global average is 72 years) and the number of children vaccinated (80% of all children) and generally think the world is worse than the data indicates. Interestingly he also describes reasons why we have a tendency to pessimism including a possible evolutionary advantage. It may be a surprise to learn that 80% of the world's population now have access to electricity and the proportion of people living in extreme poverty has halved in the last 20 years. However while it is true that people are living longer, more educated lives than they used to, world hunger is also on the rise and people in rich countries are arguably less healthy than ever. Overall there is progress but there also remains much still to do. Clearly perspective and an appreciation of the facts are central to an understanding of the issues involved.

In the UK the National Statistics relating to 'Household Below Average Income' have just been published (March 2019). They state 'Looking at trends over the past 50 years, incomes across the population have increased dramatically in real terms over time, driving falls in absolute low income. This pattern has held fairly consistently over time, with rises in absolute low income relatively rare. Over the 1980s, however, incomes for those further up the income distribution grew more quickly than for those at the bottom, driving large increases in income inequality

and in relative low income measures.'⁴ In relation to health and poverty in the UK the key phrase here is 'income Inequality' and the fact that this is rising.

The opening line of Professor Sir Michael Marmot's most recent book, 'The Health Gap'⁵ states 'Why treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick?' The message of the book is that when thinking about health or health outcomes the tendency is to consider the availability and quality of health care whereas the reality is that the factors influencing our health, on a global, national or local scale, often have less to do with health care than with societal factors such as poverty and how empowered people feel.

The 'inverse care law' was suggested over forty years ago, by GP researcher Dr Julian Tudor Hart, to describe a perverse relationship between the need for health care and its actual utilisation. It describes how those who most need medical care are least likely to receive it. Conversely, those with least need of health care tend to use health services more (and more effectively).⁶ What this means in practice is that important health messages, (eat properly or exercise regularly) and lifestyle choices, (stop smoking, moderate alcohol intake) will not be followed if people do not feel empowered in their life. Clearly advice about eating well is unlikely to be meaningful to someone who is struggling to pay their bills or worried about some other perceived more pressing concern. The clear implication is that changing societal conditions will improve health. Dramatic differences in health are not a simple matter of rich and poor; poverty alone does not drive ill health, but inequality does. Indeed, suicide, heart disease, lung disease, obesity, and diabetes, for example, are all linked to social disadvantage. In every country, people at relative social disadvantage suffer health disadvantage and shorter lives. Marmot suggests that while the usual approaches to improving health have emphasized access to technical solutions and changes in the behaviour of individuals, these methods are limited. What really makes a difference is creating the conditions for people to have control over their lives and to have the power to live as they wish. Empowerment is the key to reducing health inequality and thereby improving the health of everyone.

However we choose to define poverty it is hard to disagree with Marmot when he states 'a good society is one in which the health of the population is good, health equity is high, and both improve over time.'⁵ If we achieve that then everyone can hope to have 'the strength to be' and the ability to flourish.

Dr David Johnston
Gracehill Congregation



© Sr Roberta Hoey

South Asia Moravian Church Development Conference

It's a joy to give a brief report about South Asia Moravian Church (SAMC) Development Conference and Pastors' Retreat which took place from 8th April to 12th April 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The conference was attended by Sr Roberta Hoey, the chair of British Mission Board (BMB), Br Jorgen Bøytler, the administrator of Unity Board, and Br Paul Holdsworth from the British Mission Board, all the active pastors, nine lay members and three theological students. The conference began with a warm welcome by local pastor of Nepal, Pastor Nagendra and his wife Sr Kamaleswori.

There were around four sessions on the first day and five on second day. We were glad to receive a presentation of the draft of the framework of SAMC by a Framework Drafting committee led by Rev Thsespal Kundan. The committee comprised of Br Thsespal Kundan, Br Samson Thangpa, Sr Vani Pradhan and Br Ebenezer Gangmei: they were appointed by the British Mission Board in and after February 2018 SAMC conference in Delhi. The Framework committee distributed a copy of SAMC's

constitution in the form of booklet to each person.

The conference lasted for two days after Br Bøytler's presentation on the Unitas Fratrum. The delegates including the Pastors and Lay members focused on understanding and conceptualising the Framework.

Most of the proposals made by the Drafting Committee were agreed, in fact all were satisfied with the constitution and have shown great appreciation towards its drafting and the contents. However, the terminologies and words were quite confusing and are not commonly used in regular church settings in South Asia. Therefore a memorandum of understanding was agreed to outline the way forward and time will be given for delegates to convey to their local congregations before they should go ahead with it.

Other than that there were short devotions in between the sessions, mostly led by Br Shanti Pradhan, and Bible studies led by Br Ebenezer Gangmei and Br Thsespal Kundan on topics of maintaining the spirit of Unity in micro to macro level and the future of SAMC in comparison to Paul's missionary work in first century. The development

conference ended on 10th of April with the Cup of Covenant conducted by Br Paul.

Our pastors' retreat which began on the evening of Wednesday 10th also included Theological students. Br Paul led the retreat which was exclusively for the pastors: active and retired. The retreat involved question and answer sessions and more discussions. Br Paul made sure that everyone participated in the retreat and as a result everybody did. I expect that everyone who took part has learned something and moreover it was indeed beneficial for pastors and students alike.

His primary theme for the retreat was that we ought to be contextual in our way of doing our ministry. Although the message and the way things look would be good, they may not necessarily mean good to the people in a particular place. He ended the session with the illustration of two images: The first one is of a flower from the Himalayas - the Rhododendron which looks very good in its place. The second image is the image of England's landscape where the same flowers continue to flourish but have taken over and destroyed the entire local flowers and its vegetation.

Br Dimchui Rongmei
Student Pastor, Moravian Church, Leh, Ladakh

¹ Bonhoeffer D. *Letters and papers from prison*. London: SCM Press, 1953

² Misselbrook D. *Br J Gen Pract* 2014; 64 (628): 582.

³ Rosling H. et al. *Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World - and Why Things Are Better Than You Think*. New York: Flatiron Books, 2018

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201718>

⁵ Marmot M. *The Health Gap*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015

⁶ <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/articles/inverse-care-law>

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Notification of a Special Meeting of the Synod

I am writing to notify you that after prayerful consideration, the Provincial Board has taken the decision to convene a special meeting of the Synod per 2.3.a.4 of the Book of Order.

A full-time stipendiary position on the Provincial Board remains unfilled despite several attempts at filling the vacancy by postal ballot. To ensure continued stability and to comply with the Book of Order, the Synod is being convened for the purposes of making a conclusive decision to move us forward.

The Synod will be one day and will take place on 15th June 2019 at Hall Green United Community Church, Birmingham from 10.00am and we seek to conclude business by 5.00pm. Following their election last year, we propose that the Chairing panel will be Br Michael Newman (Chair) and Br Philip Cooper (Vice Chair).

The agenda, papers, proposals and the deputies' credential forms will be sent out by 10th May 2019. The agenda and business will be adopted at the beginning of the Synod session.

Congregations are asked to convene Council Meetings in due course to elect deputies per 2.1.a of the Book of Order and all Ex-officio members of the Synod by virtue of office are asked to attend (2.1.b).

Please provide notification of your attendance.

We thank you for your understanding and ask that you keep the Province and the Synod in your prayers as we discern our next steps forward together.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Sr Roberta Hoey

On behalf of the Provincial Board

PROVINCIAL
MEN'S
FELLOWSHIP

ANNUAL RALLY

SATURDAY 22nd JUNE 2019

TO BE HELD AT

BEDFORD MORAVIAN CHURCH

An opportunity to visit Bunyan Museum and Meeting Church, MK40 3EU. Arrive 11am leave at 12.10pm

Cup of tea at Moravian Church 12.30pm

Commencing at 1pm

Theme: **MORAVIAN MISSIONS TODAY**

Speakers: Roberta Hoey & Phil Battelle

Celebration of Holy Communion

Cups of tea served, bring a packed meal

Come along
for a time of
fellowship

Baildon



© Sr Libby Mitchell

Younger generation steps in! Martha Hanson makes sure everyone gets a bacon butty at Baildon God's Acre Easter Tidy-up.



© Br Will France

Srs Vivien Wriglesworth, Caroline Hanson, Maria Hanson, Libby Mitchell and Ruth France with the Easter cross they have decorated with tissue paper flowers. The photo was taken on a warm sunny Easter morning outside Baildon Moravian Church where the cross was displayed for the morning service. It was later taken to stand near the roadside on Browgate, for all to see as they drive up the hill into Baildon village centre.

Cliftonville

We met for the Passion Week and Eastertide readings each day in Holy Week, Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday at 10am was followed by a (homemade) soup and bread lunch, prepared by Sr Sonya Anastassi and Br Jared Stephens, a continuing time of fellowship.

The floral Cross of roses was again the centrepiece in the church for Easter, and as usual it was hung on the wall outside the entrance at the end of the service. It was still in place for the official district welcome service for Br and Sr Stephens on Sunday 28th April. Many of their friends from Groomsport and Ballymena attended, and it was great to see the crowded church for the occasion.

To the Scottish tune, Highland Cathedral, the Introit and Recessional were presentations of 'Praise God in the Dance' by Demi and Leah. Niamh, a 16-year-old with a beautiful voice and a performer in the opera house, sang 'I watch the sunrise'. Br Mark Kernoghan, District Conference chairman, presided and



Floral Easter cross outside Cliftonville
© Sr Edna Cooper

gave the address. A former colleague of Br Stephens in Ballymena, Rev Elwyn Jones, spoke for a short time before the welcomes by John Cooper on behalf of Cliftonville, Sr Sarah Groves on behalf of the Irish District, then local ministers (unexpectedly joined by four-year-old Gracie McKeown who decided to shake his hand too) greeted Br Stephens and he responded. It was a special joy to welcome a friend of Br Stephens, the Rev Emokey Rozgonyi, from Slovenia, who attended Princeton University with him and made a detour on her way to a conference in Scotland later in the week.

Most of those who attended the service met in the church hall afterwards where there was much chatting between old and new friends over refreshments. We thank those who prepared and served the more than adequate supply of food, and we are glad The Simon Community was happy to accept the remaining sandwiches and cakes.

Sr Edna Cooper

Ballinderry

A Very Special Occasion

Friday 12 April 2019 saw a packed church enjoy the 'welcome service' for our new minister at Ballinderry, the Rev Jared Stephens. He was welcomed as the 54th minister to serve the congregation, the oldest surviving church in the Irish District. Founded by Br John Cennick, our first minister was Br Symns, an Englishman while the second, Br Steinhauer was German, and we now have a pastor from North America. A good indication how our church has spread and witnessed over the centuries.

Br Stephens was not brought up in the Moravian tradition but was introduced to our church by some of the outreach work undertaken by the congregation. It has become a tradition for us to present each child in our local primary school at the p7 stage when they are about to leave and start their secondary education. On enquiring at a Bible shop in Belfast about the purchase of bibles Br Wilson also asked if the owner knew of anyone who might take a service for us. He kindly said the husband of a friend might help and gave us a contact number. Br Stephens on being contacted said he would certainly come and preach. Elaine and Jared had an instant rapport with us as he conducted the service and he was immediately re-booked! Br Wilson also met him on several occasions, once at QUB where they enjoyed coffee together and again when Br Stephens was going home on a train to Bangor. No opportunity was missed to ply the virtues of the Moravians to a captive audience. Sufficient to say this was 'fishing with a long rod' and it is wonderful that he has finally landed at Ballinderry and Cliftonville. The congregation, friends, former colleagues of Jarad and Elaine plus family members packed the church along with specially invited guests for the service conducted by Bishop Sarah Groves. Representatives from all our local denominations, ministers and lay people while Alderman Leathem represented the Mayor of our local Council. Especially welcome were the clergy who had helped with our services over the past few years. The church was beautifully decorated with flowers provided by Srs V Best and A Wilson and Br Brown had hung our new portrait of John Cennick specially for the occasion. We enjoyed the solos from

Br William Sibbett, well known in NI musical circles who noted that the church in Ballinderry had been the first place he had sung in public. The singing of the hymns was tremendous and was ably led by Sr V Gibson at the organ. It's volume only faltered when the right hand of fellowship was offered, and the entire congregation mixed around the church. The splendid singing was finally resumed as the final verse restored order. Br Wilson welcomed Br Stephens on behalf of the congregation with Br John Cooper, from our sister congregation of Cliftonville giving a welcome from the Irish District. Br Livingstone Thompson acted for the Provincial Board while representatives of the local churches welcomed Br Stephens by offering the right hand of fellowship and speaking words of welcome. Canon Bell from the Church of Ireland led the welcomes and best wishes were received from all dominations ranging from Methodists to our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters in the district. Alderman Leathem spoke in a personal capacity and brought good wishes from the Mayor and the Council. Bishop Groves inspiring sermon was based on Matthew 18 verses 1-7 and 10-14. The service ended with the Benediction: 'Go your way in peace, in love, and with Joy'. All attending then enjoyed a wonderful supper. John Wesley apparently was quite scathing in his comments on the hospitality he had received when visiting Moravian congregations. The minister representing our Methodist friends commented that John would certainly have had to eat his words such was the delightful supper provided by the ladies of the congregation and friends. Br Stephens thanked them all for their hard work. It took some time for the evening to finish as many stayed to enjoy the fellowship, make friends and renew old friendships. While it had been a formal occasion in the life of the congregation it was also full of fun and fellowship and the supertime had quite a party atmosphere. A special thanks to all in the congregation who helped in any to make it such a memorable event not only for our members but for our visitors too.

Br Henry Wilson

Bath Weston

We have had quite a lot going on over the past few months here in Bath Weston. Christmas came and went - all services were well attended. In February it was a delight to have a wedding in church: Richard Boddy who has been coming to our church since he was born married Sarah Woodruff on Saturday 16th February. The service was jointly taken by our minister Br Paul Holdsworth and Sarah's brother Rev Mark Williams. It was a lovely service and enjoyed by all who attended, and the singing nearly took the roof off! The reception was held in the church hall and the food prepared by Sarah's family who worked hard to produce such a great feast.



© Sr Carole Young

In March, Br Paul arranged a Charity Open Mic evening with the help of a mother of a BB member, in aid of Dorothy House Hospice. Br Paul soon had plenty of acts to take part. A drinks licence was arranged for wines and beers, and a raffle, which always boosts the coffers, the prizes for which were all donated. The evening was very enjoyable, and the hall was heaving - as with a lot of events you never know how many people will turn up (it was well advertised!). The total amount raised was £700, which was amazing.

The beginning of April during the school holidays, the church hall was being redecorated. The BB took down the curtains and notice boards, for which we were very grateful. The curtains have been washed and ironed, ready to go back up. To help pay for this work to be done, donations were given by people from the congregation and the groups who use the hall, to which the target was just about met. The work has now been completed and looks very welcoming. Maundy



© Sr Carole Young

Thursday service which was led by our minister Br Paul was well attended, with members from Coronation Avenue, Swindon and friends from Weston Methodist Church who also joined us. The service was followed by a cheese and wine supper that went down well!! Good Friday on the Hill was a service to remember the crucifixion in a family friendly way. Before this event happened, members from our church met at 10am with Br Paul to read the Good Friday readings from the Passion Week and Eastertide book. Then people from the other churches who were able to walk up to the ridge, met in our car park at 10.30am, a cross was carried by a couple of strong men and erected at the top of the hill. The service was being led by our minister Br Paul and Rev Mark Searle. It was a lovely service with two readings, and we sang 'Were you there when they crucified my Lord'. It is such a beautiful place high up on the hill, one side you look all over Weston Village and on the other you look over the outskirts of Bath, it is so peaceful, just sheep and cows munching away at the grass, people out walking, the countryside is just great! This service was open to the whole community and was also being live streamed on Facebook, so people who could not walk the distance were able to see what was going on as well, that's of course if they have access to Facebook. Those who did not go on the walk were invited to have hot cross buns and a cup of tea in the church hall. Our Easter day service was very well attended and led by a Methodist lay preacher, who did a fine talk and kept us all involved. Our gifts of chocolate bars were given to a food bank.

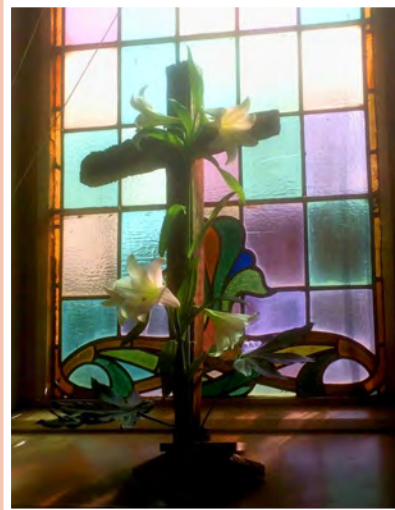
Not long before summer is here - let's hope it will be a nice one!

Sr Carole Young

Brockweir

Public was Death; but Power, but Might, But Life again, but Victory, Were hushed within the dead of night, The shuttered dark, the secrecy. And all alone, alone, alone,

Services during each night of Holy Week were well attended and it is always a privilege - though a harrowing one at times - to read of the events of this week. Sr Holdsworth took the services on Monday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday whilst other members of the congregation took the remaining services. Sr Groves led the service on Easter Day and as usual part way through the service, we retired to God's acre, to remember those that had died during the previous year. Whilst listening to the wildlife and pondering about the nature of life it was interesting to see a speedboat travelling upstream, as it's not something you see very often in a burial ground! The weather was warm and sunny and reflected our mood as we received eggs from the Easter bunny and then went over to the Sunday school for breakfast. Smoked salmon, scrambled eggs and bacon butties revived us, as well as vegetarian bacon and sausages for those of



© Br Philip Ashton

that persuasion. We must thank Sr Buffrey for playing the organ during the week and Srs Harris and Richards for arranging the flowers so beautifully.

The Book Group is about to start a new book: 'Seven brief lessons on physics' by Carlo Rovelli. An unusual choice for a church group, one might think, but actually reading books of a religious nature often has us covering this fertile ground. The book provides a quick canter through general relativity, quantum theory, cosmology, attempts at a unifying theory and ending with our place within it all. Understanding

something of the awesome nature of the universe in which we live, not only helps to put our human frailties in their true context, but also provides insights (however fleeting) for true wonder. At least, that's the intent.

I am sure we are going to have such larks but if we end up scratching our collective heads there's always that good old Moravian standby, tea and biscuits for light relief.

Sr Judith Ashton

Dukinfield

Fundraising Fun

As we all know fundraising needs to be fun. With this in mind, the stalwarts of Dukinfield Moravian Church like to add a capital 'F' to that fun for their fundraising work for our successful Dementia Warriors group.

Music from the movies

On the first of February (for one night only) the Church was turned into a pop-up cinema for the delighted attendees to hear music from the movies. This was ably provided by Arnfield Brass Band who treated us to the full cinematic experience of film soundtracks old and new.

Favourites such as music from 'Bridge on the River Kwai' and the moving solo from 'Brassed Off' - 'En Aranjuez con tu amor' were heard. Up-beat singalong numbers from 'Mamma Mia' were included as well as the rousing title music to 'Raiders of the Lost Ark'; they all really transported the audience into the full Piccy's experience.

A TV screen was provided that showed stills and original publicity from the relevant films as well as movie posters being placed all over the space that made you feel you were back in the old 2'6 seats of your local picture house.

The music was overwhelming - tuneful, moving, foot tapping and fun. The Conductor gave a great introduction to each piece and the band was full of mischief as well as musicality. It was felt a great night was had by all - film and music enthusiasts as well as all ages from 5 to 81! Many thanks for this extravaganza night.

Let them eat Cake

This time our Church was turned into a high-class patisserie, for the purpose of serving afternoon tea to the very willing clients. Cream teas were supplied again to provide funds for Dementia Warriors.



© Sr Penny Weir

This popular event was held for the second time on the Saturday before Mother's Day to make a nice treat to all the hardworking mum's out there as well as the many eager (and hungry) participants.

One member felt that they would not eat until Sunday after the amount provided by Kate, Dorothy and the hard-working team.

The atmosphere was joyful, and much chat was shared by everyone, meeting and greeting friends old and new. Held in our airy and bright recently refurbished Church worship space it gave everyone chance to see the changes made and there was much approval of not just the food but the decor.

Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do. (Ecclesiastes 9:7)

Sr Penny Weir

From Church House

It is with regret that we announce the death of Br Michael Rea, who passed on to higher service.

Br Rea, a dedicated servant of the Church, was ordained in 1974 and faithfully served the congregations of Priors Marston, Woodford Halse, Eydon and Leicester. Following his retirement in 2003, he briefly returned to service as an interim minister of Ockbrook.

We keep his family and friends in our prayers at this time.

Br Michael Rea's funeral will take place on Saturday 1st June, 11am at Ockbrook Moravian Church.

Provincial Diary for June

- 3-6 Minister's & Lay Workers Training Conference
- 12 World Mission Committee (Sr Hoey)
- 15 Special Meeting of the Synod, Hall Green
- 18 CSC (PEC)
- 21 Ockbrook Governors Meeting (Sr Hoey)
- 27-28 PEC Meeting

2	Environment Sunday
4	Eid-ul-Fitr - Muslim Ramadan ends - Muslim
9	Pentecost Shavuot - Jewish
10	Whit Monday
16	Trinity Sunday Father's Day
17	Renewal of the Brethren's Church: beginning of the building of Herrnhut by the immigrants from Moravia in 1722
17-23	Refugee Week (www.refugeeweek.org.uk)
21	Summer Solstice
26	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (www.un.org/en/events/torturevictimsday/)

Dates to remember!

Congregational Register

Baptisms

7 April 2019	Zachariah Akinola Praise Gold Gibson Adeagbo	Hornsey
14 April 2019	Lia Selah Edwards	Hornsey
14 April 2019	Jacob Hugh Brown	Hornsey

Marriages

16 Feb 2019	Richard Boddy and Sarah Woodruff	Weston (Bath)
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Reception

21 April 2019	Evermore Mtetwa	Hall Green
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Confirmation

21 April 2019	Tracy Ross	Hall Green
21 April 2019	Shem Elliot	Hall Green

Deaths

16 May 2019	Michael Rea	Ockbrook
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From the Sanctuary

Very often, relationships and community are about 'compromise' and about humility, rather than about being 'right' and 'I told you so'. Often, we want our own way - or things to go our way - and we get cross and upset when we don't get our own way, or they don't happen as we want them to happen. Then we have to find a new way of adjusting to the things that we can't change if we are not to have our lives poisoned continually with angst and upset.

A few weeks ago, my father and I had a disagreement. It concerned some robins that were beginning to build a nest in the compost recycle bin beside the house. For purely pragmatic reasons, I was keen that the robins shouldn't build their nest there because it would mean that the garden waste couldn't be emptied for a couple of months. With everything growing in the garden at this time of year, the bin is in frequent use.

Having discussed it with my father, I thought that he would attend to the bin lid to prevent the robins nesting - but he didn't. Maybe I hadn't communicated clearly enough, but then it was too late to do anything about it. Needless-to-say, I wasn't best pleased, and we exchanged a few cross words about the matter.

However, once I got over my initial displeasure, I had to accept the reality that my choices for using the bin were now limited. I had to find an alternative bin for the garden waste, learn to go with the flow of what I could no longer change, and await the hatching and fledging - however long that took. Instead of angst, I began to get curious about the process. Each morning, I would gingerly lift the lid and count the eggs in the nest; and each night, another little egg would appear. Then, on the seventh morning, I was confronted with mother robin sitting on her nest which by now contained six little eggs. Interest and excitement began to grab me rather than the annoyance I had previously felt. It began to feel wonderful that these beautiful birds had chosen 'our bin' in which to lay their eggs, and my father clearly got pleasure from watching things unfold - as did the cat!

It struck me that if things had gone my way, or the way I had wanted them to have gone, I would have been denied the opportunity of seeing this miraculous and wonderful process unfold. Can we be open to seeing new miracles happening in our Church communities and in our lives, just as they are happening with the robins?

Br Peter Gubi,
Dukinfield

British Mission Board (BMB) News in Brief

- Br Dimchui Ruangmei and Br Nathaniel Gengmei have started their pastoral placements. Br Dimchui is serving in Ladakh and Br Nathaniel is in Assam. Please keep our brothers in your prayers.

- Sr Hoey was the speaker at the Mission Evening in Yorkshire. A retiring collection raised money that will go towards the pastoral placements in South Asia.



Topic of discussion at the Mission Evening in Yorkshire

- The BMB are very grateful to the MWA for the money they have recently pledged at their annual MWA Away Day. The money will go to support the following projects: Computers for Shristi Academy, rebuild efforts in Rukwa Province, Tanzania following the devastating impact of Cyclone Idai, the expansion of the dispensary in Tabora, Tanzania.



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