

moravian messenger

FEBRUARY 2020



The New Unity Youth's Website



© Unitas Fratrum Youth Committee

In January 2019, the Unity Youth Committee met together in Tabora, Western Tanzania. Three of us plus the Unity Board Administrator and our (then) newly appointed UYC Desk Coordinator discussed various aspects of what we would like to achieve. We also considered what we could do to bring together and link Moravian Church youth members, with its many supporters and leaders. It was decided that, in line with Moravian tradition, one of the best things we could offer was fellowship and education, but the challenge was how to do this on a global scale ...

The idea came that we should first put together a Facebook page. This platform would give a majority of people around the world, a forum where they could interact with us and also with each other. They could post updates about what they were doing to share and learn more about God - not only on a provincial level but also on a local and individual level.

Next came the proposal for a Unity Youth Website. This would be more of a resource centre and information platform where we could direct people for things like the About Us page, our own Blog or for details about the upcoming Heritage Tour in 2021. You can also find links to other great places of resources online like Bible Studies, songs, camp ideas, podcasts and more!

If you are a youth member, a youth leader, or simply interested in what is going on in youth work globally within the Moravian Church I encourage you to get online and take a look and what we have to offer. Maybe you're not that confident online or unsure where to go? Why not speak to one of your youth members and discover this together or even as a church!

Like youth work, our online presence is constantly growing and developing. We are here to serve and so want to know

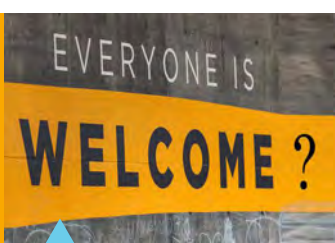
what you think or if you need any more information. Of course if you have something you wish to share we would love to hear about it - maybe it's an event that you ran? Perhaps a successful fundraiser? That trip your youth group took or simply what you learnt at Sunday School this past week? Get online and let us and the rest of the world hear your good news!

If you do have any queries, please feel free to contact me or drop onto the website or Facebook page and use the contact form. Jirina, our desk coordinator, will direct your question to the right place.

Br Phill Battelle
UYC Committee

Facebook:
facebook.com/worldwidemcyouth

Website:
www.unitasfratrumyouth.org



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Editorial

One of the best things about spring is listening to the birds' morning chorus, just before and after dawn: a stunning aural experience of nature. February is the month in which birds are said to select their mates for the coming year and nests are usually started by the end of that month. It is illegal to disturb a bird's nest so most hedging and tree work ceases in mid-February and should not restart until the end of August.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has as its strap line 'Giving Nature a Home': an aspiration for them and a challenge for all of us. Sadly, we are increasingly destroying the homes of birds, other wild animals and plants by our constant development and habitat destruction here and across the world. We are taking away the homes of other living creatures, the homes that God created for them. In Genesis 1 there are only two verses that describe the creation of women and men (26-27) and 25 verses (1-25) that describe God's creative work for everything else. After each day of creation is the little phrase 'And God saw that it was good'. Yet the way we live seems to suggest that we alone are the most important part of creation, our value far outweighing all of the rest of it. We have distorted the understanding of our stewardship over the earth to mean that we may destroy it to meet our own needs.

The Bible is the most amazing nature book - its pages are full of illustrations and parables drawn from nature and it includes accounts of birds and their activity. Sometimes different translations give different names for the birds. One family holiday on Lundy we were privileged to see a wryneck close up and the Bible reading for the following Sunday included Jeremiah 8:7: 'Even the stork in the heavens knows its times; and the turtledove, swallow, and crane observe the time of their coming; but my people do not know the ordinance of the Lord.' This is the common translation but in the version I was using at the time (Revised English Bible) wryneck was used instead of crane. It sent shivers down my spine and an awareness of the riches of God's creation and of Holy Scriptures.

So, for February perhaps we can challenge our very human centred reading of Scripture and instead search for all of the references to the rest of the created order. That might help us see the world as God sees it and honour it as his good creation. Rather than just 'giving nature a home' we might be able to share our common home with nature.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



© Sr Sarah Groves

Letters to the Editorial Team

Sustainability Review

Count von Zinzendorf's vision of self-contained settlements of Moravians, each with its own enterprises - smithy, bakery, weaving, dying, glove, lace and furniture making - proved to be only slightly successful and transient wherever it was founded. Human nature proved a strong opponent. In the British Province by the early 1900s the shop at Fulneck passed into private hands shortly followed by the one at Ockbrook, leaving the Province owner of land and property but not businesses or enterprises.

Until the 1970s Settlement houses were often in poor condition and let at rents which did not generate sufficient income to make much-needed improvements. Rent Acts in subsequent years provided rent allowances for tenants on low incomes and Rent Officers to inspect and suggest fair rents to landlords. The Province gradually took advantage of the situation and much better properties with modern amenities have resulted. However, it seems to be that there is little interest within the Province for Moravians to take up tenancies when properties become vacant, leading to the conjecture as to whether we should devote time and effort and resources in this direction.

It seems to me that these acknowledged historic sites of special interest would be better in the hands of, say, the National Trust or English Heritage, who each have the 'in house' expertise, funds, and willingness to take care of them 'forever and for everyone'. Such a move would leave the Province responsible for only the Church, Burial Ground, Meeting Hall/Sunday School and Manse at each of the Settlements. The administrative and legal burden of being a landlord would be removed from the P.E.C. agenda and leave more time for the real work of the Province.

With brotherly love,

Br Malcolm Healey
Fulneck

Have You Heard About ...?

The little boy that did something a bit naughty. He felt very ashamed of himself and he was truly sorry that he had done it. He was so ashamed of himself that he didn't want anybody to know about it.

Every night when he went to bed his mummy always came in to tuck him up and read him a story, then would say a little prayer together.

Then one night when his mummy came to say goodnight the boy said: 'I want to say my prayers by myself tonight'. 'That's fine', said his mummy, 'but is there something you can't tell me?' 'Well', said the boy, 'I could tell you, but I know you would scold me. But when I tell God and ask for his forgiveness, He just forgives and forgets.'

Isn't it wonderful to have a God like that who forgives and forgets. This is the God that Jesus came to show us when He came to us. Let's open our hearts to Him even when we have done wrong.

Br Jamie Spencer
Horton



If I ask any of you 'Is your church welcoming?' I am pretty sure you will say yes but is that really the case? Do you welcome the family with an additional needs child? Or a screaming baby? Or who arrive late? What about the family that only appears every other week? The single parents? Those new to church? How about the person who sings loudly and off key?

Several recent experiences have led me to reflect on this, not just for myself who will go to church whatever the welcome, but for those families who may be thinking about making church part of their life.

The first experience was a personal one. Having looked up the time of a service online I turned up about ten minutes before that time and heard from the outside, the obvious signs that the service had already started. Disappointing but even more annoying I couldn't work out how to get into the building so had to go away. Would a family return to try again? I doubt it. Check your web page this is where people get their information from, make sure it is up to date, that if there is a special service that is signposted. Then think about your entrance. I know it might be a bit cold to have the door open during worship, but this is by far the easiest way to say 'we are open, come in!' It also means your worship spills into the area close by. If you can't do this make sure the entrance is marked along with instructions e.g. pull/push. It is also worth having someone keeping an eye on the door for anyone loitering, they may just need a little encouragement to come in.

The second experience was relayed to me by my son's partner. She isn't a committed Christian but is obviously looking for something. She attended a carol service at her local church (they meet in a range of locations including a pub as they don't have a building). She enjoyed the service but got the distinct impression that everyone knew each other and although they were welcoming enough when she arrived she still felt like an outsider. Do you do this? When new people attend are they left on their own after the service? Do you only talk to the people you know? Does anyone ask the name of new people? Or ask about them? This can make such a difference as feeling the church is an open community encourages people to keep coming. Belonging is so important to people. There is a difference between being chatty and encouraging to being intimidating and some people have the natural gift of doing this important work, but we all need to try: just watch what you are saying.

At Christmas David and I went away to a cottage in Devon, so were away from home for Sunday and Christmas Day. On the Sunday we went to Exeter Cathedral which was fine - they are used to people who come for one service so have the welcome set at what I would consider a suitable level. For Midnight Communion and Christmas morning we decided to attend the church local to the cottage. Now the actual church is out of action as the building keeps shedding lumps of masonry into the church, so the Midnight Communion was in the local 'Victory hall'. Ok so this wasn't the best location and atmosphere wise, although they had tried, it really didn't feel particularly sacred. The flashing Christmas tree lights didn't help. When we arrived, we were given books without a 'good evening' or 'welcome' and entered the hall. There were about 150 chairs out and I was optimistic that the full space would make it feel worshipful. However, there were only 22 people thinly spread around the hall. A smaller more intimate set up, perhaps in a semicircle around the table would have been much more worshipful. People nodded greetings to one another, but no one came and asked us anything, not even during the peace. The following day the service was in a meeting room at the back of the church. There were 14 people. Again, we were not asked anything or made to feel our presence made any difference to them. How many times do we do this? We are so wrapped up in who we are that we are not open or aware of who is present, and the difference they make to the worship. If we had been a family with children, recently moved into the village, there is no way we would return. Churches do this all the time. Everyone assumes someone else, usually the minister, will talk to new people but ministers need help with this, they can't be in more than one place at a time, and it is all our responsibilities to welcome new people, encourage each other and build the community, remembering it never stays the same and should be an evolving, living thing. Look around on Sunday. Are there any new people? Does your congregation reflect the community around the church? Who isn't there?

Finally, a positive story. In 2018 we went to Wales for Christmas. The welcome we received in the local church was genuine and we felt part of their community for the short time we attended, people remembered our names and asked how things were going. It can be done but has to be intentional.

Sr Joy Raynor
Provincial Youth and Children's Officer



© Sr Roberta Hoey

Obituary: Br Kabui (1942-2020)

Br Kagauchung's more familiar name was Kabui. Official records state that he was born in October 1942. His grandparents migrated from northern Assam towards the end of the Second World War to escape from ethnic strife and to improve their economic prospects. The area they left is now called Nagaland, after the 1963-1972 division of the state of Assam into five smaller states. The family, along with a number of other Rongmei Naga tribal families, founded a Rongmei village in Binnakandi Ghat, Cachar District, on the banks of the Barak River, and switched over from subsistence on jungle products to rice farming. In the 1960s Br Kabui joined the Assam agitation and had to go underground as a revolutionary. Whilst underground, Br Kabui travelled far and wide across Assam, came across Christians, eventually committed himself to Christ and gave up his revolutionary ways.

However, he was persecuted by his own people, including his father and relatives, for giving up his traditional faith. Br Kabui had to go underground again, and this time he found it more difficult to escape from his enemies, but he found strength in Jesus Christ, his Saviour and Lord, whilst his newly married wife secretly brought him his meals. During the months of hiding, Br Kabui witnessed to his former school and revolutionary friends. Of these, four accepted Christ as their Lord and Saviour, who also began to face persecution. On one occasion, the persecutors planned to do away with Br Kabui but a timely warning from a little girl, who had overheard the conspirators, enabled Br Kabui to escape in the nick of time. The second time he was not so 'lucky', and Br Kabui and his companions were rounded up to clean a contaminated community well. Br Kabui and his friends had been falsely accused of poisoning the well and were ordered to clean it the same day on pain of death. It was raining and the men feared that they would not be able to complete the task before the end of the day and without great risk of poisoning. So, they knelt in prayer and then began the difficult task while singing hymns of praise to God. To the surprise of the unsympathetic spectators, slowly the rain stopped, the skies cleared, and Br Kabui and his friends completed the task quickly. When government officials came to know about this, they reprimanded the persecutors for troubling the Christians. The village

headman's son died the same night for no apparent reason. Overnight the hatred towards Christians turned to fear. One of Br Kabui's uncles confessed that he had been among the conspirators who had poisoned the well, and begged forgiveness. Later, he came to faith in Jesus Christ and took baptism, followed by Br Kabui's wife, Guinungliu, who was witness to his faith in the midst of suffering.



Br Kabui with his family in Binnakandi, Assam

© Br Robert Hopcroft

In 1969 Br Kabui and his friends joined the Evangelical Free Church of India (EFCI), and Br Kabui worked for some time as a teacher in a primary school. In 1977 the EFCI sent Br Kabui to Presbyterian Theological Seminary (PTS) in Roorkee in Uttar Pradesh, to train for the ordained ministry. Whilst in PTS, Br Kabui met Br Elijah Tsewang Namgyal from Ladakh, who was sponsored for theological studies by Moravian Institute. When PTS moved from Roorkee to Dehradun, at Br Namgyal's invitation Br Kabui visited the Moravian Institute and attended services of the Rajpur Moravian Congregation. In 1979, at Br Kabui's request, Rev Obed Kundan, then Director of Moravian Institute, accepted ten Rongmei children from Binnakandi as boarding pupils, and a number of older students for vocational training after 1981.

Br Kabui was ordained in the ministry of EFCI but did not get sufficient financial support. Eventually, due to great financial strain, Br Kabui was compelled to resign from EFCI. Fortunately, due to his increasingly strong connections, the Moravian Institute was able to appoint him as its Liaison Officer in Assam on 1st August 1983. Simultaneously, Rev Obed Kundan asked him to represent the Rajpur Moravian Congregation to the congregation of Rongmei believers who recognised Br Kabui as their Pastor.

During the early 1980s Br Kabui not only provided spiritual leadership but also initiated a number of projects in Assam. With financial support from the Rajpur Moravian Congregation, Br Kabui started a fishery, which did not survive due to floods. He also began a rubber plantation, on which he worked very hard and for many years, but which has not produced much income. However, the plantation is still in the hands of the congregation members. His more enduring project has been the Moravian English School in Binnakandi, financed largely by Moravian Institute in Rajpur. Those Rongmei pupils who have continued their education and training in Moravian Institute, Rajpur, have been equipped for life in the liberalised, globalised economy of the 21st century.

The most important legacy that Br Kabui leaves behind is the transformed lives of his people, in the congregations in Assam in Binnakandi, Haflong and Latingkhal, and the many lives he has touched outside the Moravian Church. His spiritual leadership was recognised during the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Moravian Institute in Rajpur in October 1988, when the world-wide Unity officially welcomed Br Kabui into the Moravian Church's ministry, and recognised Binnakandi and outstations as Moravian entities in India. In 1997 Br Kabui was consecrated presbyter, confirming his leadership in the church. His generous heart, hand and house were always open to whoever needed help. Many people came to him for advice, for his counsel was based on long years of varied experience and earthy good sense.

In his later years, Br Kabui was gratified to see his children, relatives and congregation members build on the foundations he had laid - in church, school and the wider community. He was diagnosed with lung cancer in May 2018, which he bore stoically until his death at home in Binnakandi, surrounded by his family, relatives, congregation members and friends. He is survived by his wife, Sr Guinungliu, seven children, and five grandchildren, his death mourned by many others too, and God praised for the life and ministry of His good and faithful servant, Br Kabui.

Br Thsespal Kundan
Rajpur

One Plus One (A United Reformed Church Publication)

Second article in a series on
Understanding Marriage in
the 21st Century

Being Human

Before examining the United Reformed Church (URC) booklet, One Plus One, any further in detail, in our thinking about human relationships, sexuality and marriage, we will begin by asking what it means to be a human being. The Bible tells us we are made in the image and likeness of God, and this has implications for how we find fulfilment in our lives. Let's look at some characteristics of God's nature and ask what is implied for us to be in God's image and likeness. God is love, God is Trinity, God is just, God is creative, and God is one.

God is love, so it follows that it is in giving and receiving love that we grow to become more fully ourselves. Jesus says that the greatest possible love lies in laying down your life for the other, giving yourself away. God is Trinity, so our fulfilment is rooted in being part of a community with our love focussed not on ourselves, nor our possessions, but on God and on other people. God is just, so our love must always show respect for the other, just as they are, without condition. It also means sharing what we have so that no-one goes without, especially keeping an eye out for the needs of the most vulnerable. God is creative, so our relationships should spur one another to dare and to achieve far more than we ever thought we could on our own, and to go on learning, growing and developing. This creativity will be expressed in our families and our homes, in our work and our leisure and social activities. God is one, so unity is the highest objective of human relationship. This doesn't mean all trying to be exactly the same, but recognising that difference and diversity are the constituents of unity.

Understandings of marriage and relationships have changed over time. There was a time when men had all the power and a woman's job was to do as she was told by her man, which was mainly cooking, cleaning and producing sons to inherit their power. Because wives were considered to be a man's property, it was not considered an unusual means of control to beat them. We will include an overview of the historical perspective in a future article.

For a long time, same-sex orientation was understood to be either a lifestyle choice which was sinful and could be repented of, or else a sickness which could be cured. Heterosexuals who considered themselves to be normal looked for social and psychological reasons to explain how someone had been 'turned' homosexual. Gradually over the last century, especially since 1967 when homosexuality was decriminalised, there has been an increasing understanding or belief that sexual orientation is a given, an intrinsic part of our fundamental make-up and cannot necessarily be changed.

Before we turn to the issues in the URC document, One Plus One, a little background might be helpful. Serious conversations

within the URC began in the early 1990s, facilitated by the church's Church and Society department. There were documents published both for and against the recognition of the value and dignity of same-sex relationships within the church. The General Assembly of 1996 called for formal conversations and set up working groups to produce reports. The outcome of this process of exploration was almost a split in the church because strong and emotively-held views were brought to the surface and many people on both sides of the argument felt vulnerable and threatened. The upshot was that the 2000 Assembly declared a moratorium of seven years in which it was agreed that no policy decisions would be made, but people with strong views were urged to listen respectfully to those with whom they disagreed. In 2007, General Assembly recognised that there was a great diversity of perspectives, of interpretation of scripture and of reflection on personal experience, and that the church might never come to a consensus viewpoint. That Assembly adopted what it called a Commitment on Human Sexuality which was basically a commitment to keep together, to keep orientated on God and to keep talking to each other. It recognised that the church would continue with a diversity of viewpoints, ways of interpreting the scriptures and of doctrinal, missional and ethical priorities, and that prayerfulness, respect and generosity were going to be the main ingredients for continuing conversations.

The first part of the One Plus One booklet refers extensively to this Commitment and concludes with three points. Firstly, in order to maintain its integrity, the church must look honestly at itself and face up to the extent of its internal diversity. Secondly the church's life is built on our relationships in Christ and with one another. It is vital to meet one another within the life of fellowship and common discipleship. It is also vital to be committed to exploration and dialogue together. Thirdly the unity of the church is a gospel priority and the divine gift, to be responded to in human terms through the struggle of living together.

The second part of the booklet gives seven personal reflections with viewpoints which illustrate the importance of this Commitment.

**Brn Martin
Smith & Philip
Cooper**

Ministers at Royton,
Salem and Fairfield
Congregations





Slavery and the Transatlantic Trading of Enslaved Africans:

Introduction

In August 2018, the University Road Moravian Church in Belfast held a service to commemorate Emancipation. As far as can be verified, this was the first time that a service of the kind was being held in the UK. A similar service was held again this year. Currently, I am supporting the efforts of the Africa and Caribbean Support Organisation of Northern Ireland in marking the 400th year from the commencement of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This was a Dutch Innovation, in which Britain came to be leader. Our aim is to raise awareness of the connections and legacies of Transatlantic Slave Trade to Northern Ireland.

I am not aware of any other initiative within the Moravian Church that seeks reckon with or address slavery and the slave trade, nor to come to terms with the church's own involvement in slavery. We still live in the nostalgia of having brought the gospel to the people of African descent in the Caribbean. On the question of the keeping people as slaves there is silence but on the question of working with the enslaved there is frequent talk. The myth that the missionaries sold themselves into slavery is a nice story but the evidence for this is very slim. The re-telling of the unbalanced good story only results a loss of opportunity to have a serious reflection and to learn from the errors of that injustice. This is like what we see at the state level.

In 2015 the United Nations passed a resolution proclaiming, 'the International Decade for People of African Descent, commencing on 1 January 2015 and ending on 31 December 2024', with the theme 'People of African descent: recognition, justice and development'. Later that same year in the UK parliament, Baroness Young of Hornsey asked about the plans the UK government had to observe the decade. The response by Baroness Anelay of St Johns was that, 'The British Government has no specific plans to mark the UN International Decade for People of African Descent.' The response then went on to list things, to which the government was committed, that made it unnecessary to make any specific plans to observe the decade. This response of the British government is a missed opportunity to address a perceived bias against African people and is probably typical of the ways in which the UK has over the years dealt with people of African descent: unjust, patronising and disrespectful. The ease with which concerns and cares of the people of African descent in the UK have been brushed aside, minimised or overlook is mind-boggling. This paper will look at instances to justify this assertion. The paper will focus on issues related to abolition and compensation as the corner stones on which the UK attitude of 'useful only in servitude' has been constructed.

Abolition and the Job Done - Let's Move on?

The act to make trading of enslaved Africans illegal was passed in 1807. It should of course be remembered that this was not

by consensus and there was significant opposition to it. It might have taken 20 years from the time it was first raised. The tide of public opinion against slavery itself took much longer and abolition efforts and strategies lasted nearly a century.

There were two important court cases that significantly advance the movement for abolition. The first was 22 June 1772 when the Court of Appeal judge, Lord Mansfield ruled that English law forbade the forced relocation of Africans from England to the colonies. Force relocation, often for resale, was the practice used by English planters when relationship with the people they held as slaves broke down. The case on which Mansfield ruled was one in which an enslaved man, James Somerset, objected to being forcibly returned to Jamaica. The Judge ruled that under English Law it could not be allowed, whatever the inconveniences might be.¹ The decision had far reaching consequences and implications, not least in England where enslaved people took it upon themselves to walk away from enslavement. This added traction to the abolitionists' argument that if it were not allowed in Britain then it, slavery, should be outlawed throughout the whole British realm.

The second significant moment was the case related to the *Zong* Slave ship. The owners of the Bristol registered *Zong*, were seeking compensation for Africans they claimed that they lost at sea, in an effort to preserve the fate of the whole ship. In fact, the ship captain and crew had callously thrown 133 enslaved Africans overboard, to mitigate the pressure on their water supply, which they felt would have run out and risked the lives of everyone. Their idea was that if the enslaved, which was for them property, died on board then the shipowners would have to bear the loss. However, if they died by drowning, then the loss would be covered by the insurers. The Chief Justice, the same Mansfield who made the landmark ruling a decade before, heard the case and in 1783 ruled against the shipowners.² The heartless, depravity of the ship owners was exposed in the court as they tried to make the case for compensation. They hung their case on the assertion that the Africans they murdered constituted loss property. The moral outrage arising from the case helped to solidify the cause for abolition, which was at first only concerned with the dangers of the trade, not the fact of enslavement. This attitude led one prominent Belfast businessman, Waddell Cunningham, in 1786 to propose developing a slave shipping business out of Belfast, believing that he could offer a more humane trade. This proposition was made to sympathetic ears who with whom Cunningham sat, with others of abolitionist bent, in the board room of the Belfast Charitable Society. Happily, for Belfast, his proposal didn't gain sufficient support and was eventually dropped. The abolitionist movement gathered momentum and the 1807 Act to make the shipping of enslaved Africans illegal was passed. Twenty-six years later the Act to outlaw the enslavement of African was passed.

How the UK Deals with its Past



First part of a paper presented at the Moravian Church Conference in the Netherlands, October 31 - Nov 2, 2019 by Br Livingstone Thompson, PhD (Provincial Board and Minister of Belfast University Road and Kilwarlin Congregations)

The achievement of the abolitionists is the story that people in the UK know and, by and large, love to tell. However, consistently presenting only the morally high ground of the abolitionists, served to conceal the other issues associated with abolition, namely the revolt of the enslaved and the inefficiency and failures of forced labour, which caused the sugar economy to succumb to the pressures of the industrial revolution. Already in 1807 the economic argument was made that favoured ending the system of forced labour. The PM at the time, William Wyndham Grenville, denounced economic objections to the proposal to end slave trading by declaring that the West Indies planters already produced more than they could sell, and continuation would result in their ruin.³

The story, which the British do not seem to know or chose not to tell, is that in addition to the immorality of forced labour, by the second half of the 18th century downturn in the West Indies sugar industry was already evident. According to Eric Williams, former PM of Trinidad and Tobago, colonial forced labour and the sugar economy was a vicious, inefficient and unprofitable economic system that was being supported by business interests that could not see that the tide was turning. The attack on the vicious West Indian economic system by astute capitalist happened in three phases:

(a) first was the attack on the trade in enslaved Africans, which was outlawed in 1807.

(b) second was the attack on the inefficient and inhumane system of forced labour. In this the Africans themselves played a critical role and abolition came in 1833.

(c) third was the abolishment of sugar preferences in 1846.

1846 was the same year the Corn Laws that levied high taxes on locally grown corn were abolished. The Anti-Corn Law League was predicated on the same principle to the anti-slavery movement.⁴ The abolitionist gave the language in the form of a moral argument that the masses could understand. They were heard more so because the capitalist interests had shifted from the colonial side to the emerging industrial side.⁵ The capitalist argument that West Indian sugar industry monopoly was inefficient and unprofitable was not easily heard. On the opposing side of that argument were oligarch imperial interest unable to see the inevitable. However, as we shall see in the next part, those who opposed abolition were handsomely compensated, despite their stubbornness and blindness.

As far as Britain was concerned, then, once slavery itself was abolished, the job was done. There was no need to tell another story and the only thing to be concerned with was the economic loss of the plantation owners and it is to this we must now turn our attention in considering British response.

1. David Olusago, *Black and British: A Forgotten History*, London: MacMillan, 2016, 137.
2. Olusago, 205.
3. http://abolition.e2bn.org/people_65.html, [Accessed October 25, 2019].
4. A sort of poetic justice, which makes the point about UK mercantile interest upstaging West Indian sugar interest was that Plantation House, now Plantation Place, which evolved from companies owned by slave-owning merchant Blyth and Greene, was acquired by British Land Company, which traces its origin to an offshoot of the National Freehold Land Society (later Abbey National) formed in 1849 with the two chief architects of the freehold land movement Richard Cobden and John Bright who formed the Anti-Corn Law League. That league predicated on the same principle of the anti-slavery movement evidence supported the emerging English industries that could only succeed if the sugar industry monopoly ended. Quaker interest in the rise of English industrialism and Quaker support of anti-slavery movement were two sides of the same coin.
5. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 136.

7TH BETHLEHEM CONFERENCE ON MORAVIAN HISTORY & MUSIC

Call for Papers

October 8-10, 2020

This conference explores Moravian history and music from the fifteenth to twenty-first centuries in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

We are now accepting proposals for individual papers, panels, or lecture recitals on any topic related to Moravian history and music.

Please submit a proposal of 300 words or less, accompanied by a one-page CV, by April 1, 2020 to: www.moravianconferences.org/submit-a-proposal/

The program committee will notify accepted applicants by May 15, 2020. A limited number of grants for housing and travel costs are available. We encourage submissions from undergraduate students for whom there may be special panels and poster sessions.

Visit our website for more information and updates: www.moravianconferences.org

Sponsored by Moravian Archives, Moravian College, and Centre for Moravian Studies, in partnership with Moravian Music Foundation, Moravian Theological Seminary, and Moravian Historical Society

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A Genuine Call

Nobody asked me to write this, and I am not sure who might want to read it, but as the years go by and I am kept going by ever more medication I feel a strong sense of compulsion. It must be done, and it must be done now as the body weakens and the mind deteriorates, for not one of us knows how long we may have to help someone in need. I do hope and pray that by sharing my personal story some may find help and encouragement.

My story was not unlike many another, but I remember as a young teenager I did have thoughts about being a minister and these thoughts although persistent were kept to myself and pushed aside for a time. I knew I wanted to become a member of the Fulneck congregation, but my parents said 'no'. However, a year later when I was sixteen, I was very glad to be allowed to join the confirmation class and become a congregation member.

As the years passed my parents felt it would be a good thing for me to leave Fulneck School and go to another school's sixth form. Interviews and inspection visits were arranged and having taken place I knew I had to speak out against this decision that was being taken. I begged to be allowed to stay on at Fulneck and remember being so relieved when this was agreed. During this time my parents felt something should be done to get me started on a career path and so I attended some extra-mural law lectures at Leeds University and was introduced to a firm of solicitors in Park Square where I would be articled and apprenticed on leaving school.

My father didn't help. When I said I was thinking about offering to work in the church as a minister I knew he was not exactly pleased. He reminded me straight away how I enjoyed driving and said that if I became a minister, I would never be able to afford a car. My father also knew that I loved travelling, to visit and explore foreign countries and suggested I would never be able to afford to do any travelling. He never lived long enough to know me as a minister. Thinking about it much later he may have been wanting me to count the cost and to make sure of my sense of call before giving a commitment.

In those years after the war many young men were being called up to do two years of National Service. On leaving school I was surprised to be chosen to enter the Royal Air Force as 'potential officer material'. I was grateful for this time as it gave me opportunity to sort out my thinking. I knew I did not want to

stay on in the RAF and I knew that I did not want a career in the legal profession. It was only after much struggling that it became absolutely clear that it was God calling me to work for him as a minister. Eventually I gave in and said: 'all right Lord, you win, but it has to be done in your strength for I am depending totally on you.'

So I wrote a letter to the Provincial Board to see if it would want me and, to my amazement, my offer for church service on leaving the forces was accepted. I was to go to Fairfield and live in the College which was being re-opened for a few students after four years' closure. The College was accredited and recognised by the University of Manchester and our lectures

led us to degrees or certificates in Biblical Knowledge and Theology. My father died during my first year of study and Beth, to whom I had been writing in Jamaica, came home and lived in Bradford. We were not allowed to get married while Beth's father was home on furlough from Jamaica and had to wait until I had my final results. Beth's mother remained in this country until we were married at Horton in 1958 and I was ordained that year. We were sent to serve at Kingswood in Bristol and our son, Andrew, was born there just as we completed a year and were called to serve in Jamaica.

We sailed in January 1960 and started to work at Mizpah and Ritchies to which were added Mile Gulley and Bethphage.

There was a time we also had charge of Christiana (Zorn), Bohemia and Moravia when Br Haydn Todd was on furlough. Our daughter, Susan, was born while we were at Mizpah, and we were called to move to Carmel with Kilmarnock and New Works in Westmoreland in 1963. During these years I was serving as Provincial Youth Secretary and taught one day a week at Bethlehem Teacher Training College. During our time at Carmel the Jamaica Synod recognised our new congregation of Beersheba and our son Ian was born. We also looked after the congregations of Springfield and New Fulneck when Br Pat Craig was on furlough. They were full and exciting years in that Province.

We returned to work in the British Province in 1970 and had to learn about motorways and the Beatles! We spent six years at Wheler Street living in Fairfield Square and I supplemented the church stipend by working (part-time) as a social worker in a girls' remand home before being sent to Westwood in Oldham, to which was added Salem. From 1972 I also served as Provincial Youth Secretary for ten years running the summer schools etc. Then we were called to Fulneck in 1985 which involved some

work as a Governor of my old School and also some more teaching. After five years Synod elected me to serve 'part-time' on the Provincial Board in conjunction with the work of ministry at Fulneck. It was difficult attempting to do the congregation work and the work of the PEC. In 1994 I was elected to the Board 'full-time' with a small London congregation (Harold Road) and served as Chairman of the Provincial Board and Chairman of the British Mission Board with a specific responsibility for India. It has been a great privilege to work together with brothers and sisters of other denominations throughout all the years but particularly in Yorkshire at the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council and when on the board at national level.

And in case anybody thinks there was no time for fun let me assure you I enjoyed the work of ministry and made time to enjoy my family and friends. My love of gardening and the results are well known, and I always enjoy relaxing to some classical music. Singing with the Moravian Singers has brought much pleasure as has attempting to make music by playing the piano.

We retired to Leeds in 2000 and had two years of retirement before the shock of being elected as a bishop of the Unitas Fratrum. Once more I was regarded as a serving minister although in a somewhat more advisory, senior role. I feel I have been greatly blessed by the rich fellowship and support shared with my fellow bishops in the British and the Continental Provinces and those of the Unity around the world.

It has been a truly wonderful life and I am most grateful to my wife, Beth and our family and all the friends and colleagues who have supported and encouraged me along the way. So I know I can say God's call was a genuine call and I am truly thankful that I acted upon it. I have so much for which to be thankful.

And just for the record, remembering what my father said we would never have, as it happened the church gave us a Saddle Allowance of £90 to make sure we could ride around on a horse or mule when living in Jamaica for ten years, but we were glad that we could afford to have a car. As for travelling abroad the church has sent me to places as far apart as Alaska and Tanzania, to Leh in the Himalayas and Rajpur and Binnakandi (Assam) of India and Kathmandu in Nepal ten times as well as Jamaica, Trinidad, Curacao and St Thomas etc. and to every European country including the Czech Republic many times.

Br John McOwat
Bishop of the Unity



Come and take me home mum

Ellen Dalgaard Jensen

COME AND TAKE ME HOME MUM

is a fascinating read. It goes straight to the heart. Are these stories true? Yes they are. Is it true that the poorest and most overlooked children can suddenly blossom into the happiest, healthiest and most talented of children? Can 7-year-old children teach adults how to read and write? Is it true that ants eat hens and young rabbits? It is actually. But remember, we're in Africa, more specifically in Tanzania.

The book is ideal for reading aloud to young children and for children who can read themselves. The content of the book is unique. There is nothing like it elsewhere. All the children in the book, or their parents, suffer from leprosy. Look at the beautiful photos.

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Happy reading

Former sound technician, webdesigner and consultant at the Danish Broadcasting Corporation

René Eriksen

The book is ideal for reading loud and the many photographs would be a good outset for classroom discussion. It could also be used in teaching English as a second language to nonnative speakers of all ages.

The book can be obtained in bookstores, the Moravian Mission in Denmark. Phone 45 35294820, E-mail : bdm@bdm-dk.dk and at the publisher house, kahrius.dk

44 pages

215 x 280 mm

Price: 125 kr.

Ellen Dalgaard Jensen born 1936 in Skjern, Denmark. Chose to live a life among the poor and underprivileged. Her mission in life is to raise awareness about the overlooked and neglected. She is a qualified nurse and midwife, and has attended courses in pastoral care, clinical pastoral training, social psychology and anthropology at Moravian College and at the Moravian Seminary in the US.

Kahrius

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Bath (Weston)

At this present time our church is under construction, having the church tower waterproofed, new toilets, new storage area and another kitchen. This is so that the church can also be hired at the same time as the hall, to bring in more revenue. The hall is being used for all our services at this time.

In November our minister Br Paul Holdsworth organised another Charity Open Mic evening with the help of Catherine, a mother of a Boys Brigade boy. This was well attended and just over £700 was raised for Great Ormond Street Hospital; another one is in the pipeline sometime in the Spring.

Instead of Carol's by candlelight this year, we had Carol's by lantern light - it worked very well and enjoyed by all. This was followed by refreshments of mulled wine and homemade mince pies (homemade are the best!!!).

Christingle service was very well attended even though we changed the time this year from 6.00pm to 4.30pm. We seem to have more adults these days than children. Christmas Day service was led by our minister Br Paul Holdsworth. The congregation were asked if they had opened any presents, none had except Br Paul, so he was delighted to tell us what



© Sr Carole Young

Patsy had given him: a shirt, socks and also a sign which said 'Do not disturb GENIUS AT WORK', which he proudly lodged on the table (see photograph). A lovely service followed.

On the 5th Sunday in December we were privileged to have Br Paul and Sr Patsy at our service, Sr Patsy led the service and Br Paul played the piano. It seemed that we were the only church having a service on this particular morning, as we saw a few new faces appear in the congregation who were made very welcome.

All regular activities are now starting back after the Christmas break: Love Weston cafe only had one Friday off and is very well attended from 9am until 3pm. Lunch fellowship on a Wednesday has been going for many years and is enjoyed by all who attend (usually about 40 people).

The Boys Brigade are still very involved in the Weston community, the band playing for many events. They have also had some new recruits in the Anchor division which is very encouraging for the leaders.

We from Bath (Weston) wish you all a VERY HAPPY and HEALTHY 2020 (I like saying 2020).

Sr Carole Young

Cliftonville

The month began with a family games night in the Church hall, next we were delighted when 'Santa Cecil and his elves' decided to power wash the church steps in preparation for Christmas. An attractive new sign board was made by Br John Cooper that announced the Cliftonville happenings over Christmas

On 15th there was a service of Lessons and Carols in the morning and a Blue Christmas service was held in the evening; this was particularly appreciated by those who had lost members of their family at this time of year, or any for whom Christmas was a less joyful occasion because of ill health or loneliness. The church was lit by candles at the front and later tealights were added by those of us who wanted to remember someone. We thank Br Jared Stephens for his meditations and for introducing this intimate and moving service.

The making of the Christingles was another happy occasion with plenty of skilful helpers to get the job completed in record time. This was followed by the making of cookies and/or putting together and decorating Gingerbread Houses. The results were most attractive; altogether a truly fun evening.

The Christingle service was held on the 22nd and we had a well filled church. We were glad to welcome Sunday scholars from



Br and Sr Stephens at Christingle Service

© Sr Leah Walker

the past, some with children and others with grandchildren. We gathered as usual on Christmas morning at 10am and followed the Christmas liturgy.

On the 29th the congregation organised another Lessons and Carols since Br Stephens' father is unwell, and he and Elaine are making a trip to Michigan to visit him. Our good friend, the Rev Ken Doherty has agreed to take the service for him on the 5th, when we begin our changed time of worship from 10am to 11.30am and will have our time of tea and fellowship before, rather than after the service.

Sr Edna Cooper



© Sr Claire Maxwell

Fetter Lane

Celebrating the season

Knowing that preparation is the key to success, a number of us gathered at Fetter Lane on Saturday, 21st December to make sure that we had enough Christingles to go around, that they stood up well and were in sizes to suit every grip. The work was worth it, and we were pleased to welcome members of the congregation as well as friends and extended families - the number of children present made it a special afternoon. Sr Claire Maxwell led us through the story, helping the children (and adults) by providing masks of the main characters. The lighting of the Christingles was a beautiful moment as ever.

The New Year always brings a time of reflection on the past but at Fetter Lane we're also looking forward to shaping the role of our small congregation within the wider community. Much to be done but with a positive sense of anticipation - Happy New Year from all at Fetter Lane.

Sr Cynthia Dize



© Sr Martina O'Brien

Kilwarlin

Our annual Garden Party in June was held on what we thought must have been the wettest day of the year, a bit of a disaster for outdoor games and ice cream sales. But with the support of friends and neighbours who faithfully support us every year the proceeds

Salem

The year 2019 was beset by several problems at Salem. The flat roofs continued to leak whenever it rained hard, despite having in theory a 20-year guarantee. Rubbish was dumped in the car park that we had to pay to have removed. We had a stump fitted on the drive that was damaged shortly after fitting and had to be removed. Then all the windows facing the car park were smashed by vandals high on laughing gas. Finally, we have had CCTV fitted and the last few weeks of the year were peaceful.

Despite these incidents we still manage to hold our monthly Coffee

were not much less than other years. If we thought the garden party was wet, our barbeque held at Crawfordsburn Country Park for the Irish District was even wetter. Sr Mandy and Br Mark Kernohan bravely cooked burgers as we stood around in wellington boots under umbrellas. Surprisingly we all enjoyed ourselves despite the weather. We held a country and gospel concert in Hillsborough Village Centre in October. This was a success and brought in some much-needed income. The year ended with a lovely Christingle Service. The church was full with family and friends all giving encouragement to the children.

The first phase of the reclamation of Zula's Hollow is now finished. The ground has been cleared of undergrowth and trees cut back, revealing the pond and site of the old summer house. The second phase, for which we hope to receive funding would see the fountain in the pond in

working order. Signs have been erected showing points of interest. The management of Hillsborough Castle have shown an interest and may include us in their literature and have kindly offered us any advice we might need in advertising our grounds.

Sr Esther Law

Mornings, which are well attended. We welcomed Sr Jane Dixon to Sisters' Sunday, Br David Howarth to Harvest and Br Bob Hopcroft to our Anniversary and Reunion Service. We have decided to discontinue the Reunion until our 200th Anniversary in 2024 as the numbers have fallen to only 4 this year. The Christmas services were well attended, and we even had some children at the Christingle service. We also had a good turnout to the Sustainability Review meeting as it was held after church over coffee.

We now look forward to the next decade and, as we have an aging congregation, hope we shall still be here at the end!

Sr Anne Broadbent

From Church House

Provincial Diary for February

4 World Mission Committee, Church House
(Sr R Hoey & Br M Kernohan)

11-12 PEC

19 Diversity & Inclusion Training Day, Ockbrook

29 Mission & Society, Fairfield (Sr R Hoey & Br M Kernohan)

Congregational Register

Marriages

21st December 2019 James Andrew Walker & Sophie Louise Hibbert Fairfield

Deaths

24th December 2019 Lee William Smale Fairfield



© Sr Roberta Hoey

Twinned Toilets at Church House

The Moravian Women's Association (MWA) have twinned four of the toilets at Moravian Church House and are supporting toilet projects in Malawi, Zambia, DRC and Uganda. This is part of the Toilet Twinning scheme (www.toilettwinning.org) which funds the work of international relief and development agency Tearfund. The charity helps tackle the global water and sanitation crisis with help from supporters who can uniquely get involved by twinning their toilet with a country in need of better sanitation. Donations are used to provide clean water, basic sanitation, and hygiene education in these countries.

1-7	World Interfaith Harmony Week
3	Poverty Action Sunday (www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday)
8	Day for Victims of Trafficking
9	Racial Justice Sunday (www.ctbi.org.uk)
11	World Day for the Sick
14	Valentine's Day
23	Church Action on Poverty Sunday (http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday)
24 Feb-8 March	Fairtrade Fortnight (www.fairtrade.org.uk)
25	Shrove Tuesday
26	Ash Wednesday

Dates to remember!



From the Sanctuary

I am often dismissive of the book of Leviticus, because the details of it seem to have little relevance for us today as Christians. It is a book in the Bible which features little in the lectionary readings, so we don't have many sermons that are based on that book in our Sunday services. It contains mainly a series of regulations for worship and religious ceremonies from ancient Israel, and it regulates ways of living and worshipping God so that people could maintain their relationship with God. Perhaps the most famous words to come from Leviticus are 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' - words that are often attributed to Jesus, and yet by uttering them, Jesus was merely quoting the early scriptures that evolved out of the formation of the establishment of Israel as a coherent community, based on a belief of what was God's will - and therefore God's law.

For those Christians who believe that the Bible should be taken literally, there are many challenges in living-out the detail in Leviticus, because if taken literally, ordinations should be rather bloody affairs with the killing of many animals involved. According to Leviticus, sin offerings are to be made every time we sin, and there is much about animal sacrifice and about how animals are to be eaten which most Christians don't live by today. There are even instructions about what to do with mildew in your house, and how to purify oneself from skin diseases - and even what to do with unclean bodily discharges! Much of it is of historical interest in its detail, but of little relevance spiritually for 'now', if it is taken 'literally'.

However, looking more deeply at Leviticus, one can get a real sense of the deeper spiritual wisdom that lies at the heart of the book - which I believe is relevant for today; and that wisdom is in the beneficial nature of living with an awareness of God, and of 'holiness', which needs to be at the centre of our living. How often do we think about God in the detail of what we do before we do anything, or make any decision? Yet, Leviticus shows that God is concerned with the detail of our lives, and that our lives would be lived better if we were concerned about God more in the detail of everything that we do.

Whilst 'God' has been taken out of much in society, many of the political messages we are surrounded by regarding climate change and single use plastic (to name but only two) have, at their core, the necessity for good stewardship of our planet - a biblical principle found in Leviticus; therefore, God is in it. Much of the antidote to the hate in society is found in Leviticus - 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' - a principle that is found at the centre of the work of many charities and individuals, but without acknowledgement of God; yet their work is of God. It is all ancient wisdom from ancient Israel, which, if strayed too far from, results in struggle, conflict and destruction - for us and for society. Guidance for our wellbeing and wholeness rests within living close to what God wills - yet this ancient wisdom is often so easily cast aside. So - how can you live in such a way that has God, and holiness, more at the centre of your life? For in that, lies our wellbeing, wholeness and salvation - as individuals and as society.

Br Peter Gubi,
Dukinfield



Many of you will already be aware that on the afternoon of Thursday 26th December a fire broke out at Hornsey Moravian Church causing significant damage to the church sanctuary. We thank the Lord that the building was unoccupied at the time and no one was hurt. We would like to express our praise and gratitude the London Fire Service for their quick response and their skilful handling of the incident, which helped contain the fire to the sanctuary leaving the hall and other areas untouched. The congregation were able to meet in the

Memorial Chapel at Church House on the Sunday after the fire and are now able to meet in the church hall at Hornsey for services.

The PEC continues to work with the congregation and church committee at Hornsey in respect of the fire. The surveyors and insurance loss adjusters have completed their inspections and it is hoped that repair work will commence soon. The PEC and Hornsey Congregation would like to thank everyone across the Unity for their support and prayers.

© Sr Roberta Hoey

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