

moravian messenger

JULY 2021



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Newly elected Provincial Board

Provincial Synod 2021 Online

This year we held our 100th Provincial Synod online. Aware that we could not meet in person the Provincial Board and the Church Book Committee worked hard to set up a Zoom Synod at Ockbrook Moravian Church.

The opening service led by Br Martin Smith, minister at Royton and Salem, set the tone for the Synod. He spoke of mutual love between the persons of the Trinity and the love that should be shown between members of the Church. Even though the Synod was so physically distanced there was a real sense of fellowship.

The first item of business at Synod was the proposed closure of Ockbrook School after 222 years. The chair of the Provincial Board, Sr Roberta Hoey, had

the unenviable task of sharing with Synod the devastating news that COVID had dealt a body blow to the school and that the school was no longer financially viable. Many questions followed and the issue, rightly, took up all the first morning. Deep sympathy was expressed to the pupils, families and staff of the school by many Synodals. The Provincial Board will make a statement on the proposed school closure in the August edition of the Messenger.

On the Saturday the elections for the Provincial Board were held. The elections resulted in a full Provincial Elders Conference of six members being elected, with Sr Roberta Hoey being elected for a further three years and Br David Howarth being elected for a year as a stipendiary PEC member. Br Paul Holdsworth and Br

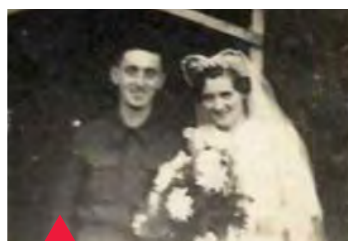
Michael Newman were elected for three years as non-stipendiary members and Br Peter Gubi was elected for a one-year term as a non-stipendiary PEC member. Br Livingstone Thompson has one year to complete as a non-stipendiary member. Note the term Provincial Board and Provincial Elders Conference (PEC) are used interchangeably in the Church and in this report. We will have brief biographies of the new members of PEC, Br Michael Newman and Br Peter Gubi in the August edition of the Moravian Messenger.

Much of the time of Synod was taken up with the reporting back of the Provincial Board and of the various standing committees of the British Province. Questions and comments followed these reports. Memorials were also presented

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Schools Out ...

Schools have already closed for the summer break in Northern Ireland and they will be closing in England in July. Universities have also closed. For so many pupils and students they will be walking out of the doors, or already have walked out of their educational institution for the last time. Pupils leaving primary school who will be going on to secondary school in the autumn, students leaving their secondary school following exams to go onto work or tertiary education and students leaving further and higher education for work.

It has been a miserable time for pupils and students over the past 18 months. The COVID restrictions that schools have had to operate under have been restrictive educationally and socially. There have been the months of home schooling with some children falling behind for a variety of reasons. Students at college and university have had remote lectures, no face-to-face meetings and no social interaction. Much of the value of a university education is in broadening of horizons

by the meeting together of people with very different perspectives on the world coming from diverse social, political, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils and students will leave their institutions with few of the traditional events at the end of term and for many universities there will be no graduation ceremonies either. It is a sad end to what is a huge part of anyone's life with no formal goodbyes or opportunities to give thanks for all that has been. COVID has meant that they are going out with a whimper rather than a bang.

So please in the next weeks, pray for all our young people in education and those leaving education and for all staff who have been so stretched and affected by the pandemic.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Letter to the Editorial Team

This letter is not inspired by envy or jealousy but by my Christian concern for my country's poor after my article on poverty data in our Messenger. I want you to know that Rupert Murdoch's Sunday Times rich list tells you that there are now 171 billionaires, 24 more than last year, in the UK today. Their combined wealth grew by more than 20% in 12 months.

Government and central banks have made huge fiscal and monetary interventions (borrowings) that has sustained and also increased the fortunes of the fortunate wealthy. This is causing great concern in the corridors of power prompting calls for urgent reform of our taxation on the extraordinarily wealthy. Calls are being made for a windfall tax on the individuals and companies having benefited from dealing financially with the pandemic.

George Dibb, Head of the Centre for Economic Justice says: 'there is a massive structural flaw in the economy [meaning] that whatever the economic shock [the nation experiences] the wealthier get wealthier. Societies like ours which are so unequal are not good for everyone economically except for a small number of us. Policy makers need to address what is that dangerous gap or risk losing trust in our democratic economy.

Luke Hildyard, executive director of the High Pay Centre thinktank, says a huge uplift in living standards and public services can be achieved by taxing privileged wealthy more effectively.

Where do Moravians find our chief elder in this, more over where will he expect to find us?

Br Alan Holdsworth



In essential - Unity Looking at Intergenerational Ministry

I'm writing this after an interesting and challenging day at Synod at which it became clear that we need to start thinking about the way we can do things differently. This article is the result of attending an online Intergenerational Conference last month. I hope it makes you think about re-evaluating how we can be church together.

To start with we need to recognise who is present in church, the generations they may be from, and are there any generations missing? It could be of no surprise to find out there are groups missing from our church communities as they stand, but are we in contact with people from these groups, and if not what ways do we consider we can build these contacts?

Why intergenerational relationship and ministry?

Being all ages together used to be natural in all things. Now religious institutions are one of the few places that are intergenerational, and children and young people connect with adults of all ages (and each other), but we have fallen into the habit of silos depending on ages. This should only be part of the story and being all together nourishes a robust faith across all generations. Only as the whole body of Christ can there be a range of views, skills, gifts, and perspectives. It also recognises that a faith journey is for the whole of life, you are never too old to learn more, explore faith and deepen a relationship with God (and other people).

The web of care and nurture of faith allows all those in church to invest time, love, and energy into the young (and each other). The young need to see how adults do 'faith', respond to God, and live a Christian life, and how they sometimes fail but dust themselves down and get up again. They need to see how life's difficulties and celebrations are part of all Christians' lives and being a person

of faith does not mean life is always easy, smooth and without difficulties.

Being intergenerational in church isn't just about sharing spaces but about sharing stories and supporting one another. As we accompany one another in ministry, mission, and daily life we 'ferry' faith across the borders. We value 'others' with different perspectives on life, at different stages of life and faith journey, and recognise the love God has for all of us. Analysing who is and isn't in church across a range of factors will help us to develop a ministry for all, including those currently on the fringes, or outside the church. Giving voice to everyone, not just those who are used to speaking, but those with no power will encourage growth for everyone. A recognition that we learn and grow together, that everyone contributes to everyone else's growth is vital for this to succeed.

To do this work we may need to act in new ways:

- Share resources - use them to bless and sustain the community;
- Recognise the Other's expertise (whatever that is from playing a musical instrument, leading worship, or making Lego models);
- Share stories across the generations asking -

Where did you see God in this?

What scars are there from your experiences? (be cautious here)

How was God present in difficult situations?

- Build networks;
- Make decisions together.

Act as called to by Psalm 78:1-4

- 1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,

3 things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

There are at least 80 references to 'generations' in the bible and usually referring to telling stories. This doesn't have to be linear it can hop around the generations, younger people may have stories of faith to tell their elders of where God is at work in their lives, or where they see it at work in others lives.

Who are the generations?

In European and North America commonly considered to be:

- 95 and older (1901-1926) - the Greatest Generation
- 76-94 (1927-1945) - the Silent Generation (seen and not heard) or Traditionalists
- 57-75 (1947-1964) - Baby Boomers
- 41-56 (1965-1980) - Gen X or Busters
- 25-40 (1981-1996) - Gen Y or Millennials
- 9-24 (1997-2012) - Gen Z or iGen
- 8 or younger (2012 - present) - Alpha Generation

Each generation is formed by the great events that have happened during their lives like world wars, introduction of technology, milestones like a man landing on the moon etc.

Be aware that generations may be defined differently by other cultures, possibly by migration. How can we look at that within our churches?

Where does one begin?

Start by naming, claiming and celebrating the generations present remembering this is part of the witness of the church.

Tips for facilitation of intergenerational interaction

Think generations in every aspect of your ministry. When having a get-together is there seating for everyone - how about an event that has a whole range of seating options, rocking chairs, low chairs, high back chairs, bean bags, etc. The seating needs to suit everyone and sometimes this means we must rethink what seats we provide.

It may be worth doing 'dots' - people take a coloured spot that match their generation, or decade of birth, and then they are asked to get in groups of five with everyone in the group having a different colour dot. It doesn't have to be sticky dots, how about flowers, Lego bricks, wrapped biscuit or cake (swapping encourage between the generations), etc.

Keep to groups of five - more than this and the group tends to split on age lines. Seat around small tables, or none - long tables tend to divide. Use the groups for prayer, bible study, activity, discussion of the way forward, etc. but allow time for stories to be told by everyone in the group, and different perspectives to be seen. This can be a marvellous opportunity to share stories across the generations.

The dot system can be used to get people into groups of the same generation, maybe to look at what they can bring to the session before coming into mixed age groups.

So, I urge you to think intergenerationally, not just in church, but at social events, church committees, bible study groups etc. It is easier to talk to people of your own generation but so rewarding to converse with those from different generations, to build intergenerational relationships and encourage flourishing of all those the church is in contact with.

Sr Joy Raynor
Provincial Youth and Children's Officer

Provincial Synod 2021 Online continued from front page

from the Moravian Women's Association, the Men's Fellowship and the Diaspora Secretary.

We all missed the opportunity to chat together at break times, lunch times and in the bar in the evening. However, Sr Lorraine Shorten hosted a Social Hour on Zoom each evening which gave us a chance to meet informally and get to know those we might otherwise not have a chance to talk too.

The Provincial Board have been planning for the future and these plans were unfolded at Synod on the second day. In 1722, the community of Herrnhut was founded by religious refugees, and within 10 years, in 1732, the first missionaries had gone out from Herrnhut and the renewed Moravian Church entered the world stage. So, the Provincial Board's plan for a Decade of Celebration and Renewal has been called Project 32.

Project 32 has several strands that the Provincial Board brought to Synod. One strand is that of stewardship in the congregation.

- o There will be a ten-year stewardship programme to help members better steward their time, skills, knowledge and money. This would involve the setting up of a Stewardship Committee.

- o Another strand is that of Evangelism and the Provincial Board resolved to set out a ten-year plan for evangelism for the British Province. This would be implemented by the British Mission Board.

- o A proposal from Mission and Society Committee added a discipleship strand to Project 32. This will be achieved by using the resource called Holy Habits in each congregation in a systematic way. Holy Habits is a flexible two-year programme. This would be coordinated by a working group.

- o Lastly, a programme of possible staff posts and building developments to go through the ten-year project. These could include reshaping the Districts of the Church and revamping their work; employing a General Secretary for Mission; employing a Communication Officer; reviewing property holdings; developing a retreat centre at Brockweir and possibly relocating Church House.

- o Another committee will be set up to implement and monitor Project 32.

Many other proposals were brought by the Provincial Board at this Synod. One was to allow for the strengthening of the British Mission Board by expanding its membership. Another proposal increased the remit of the Finance Committee to include property as so much of our assets are in settlement properties with associated difficulties. Other proposals thanked Sr Zoe Taylor and Br Mark Kernohan for their service on the Provincial Board.

A further proposal from the Provincial Board was about the setting up of a Provincial Archives and Heritage Committee as a standing committee of the Province to advise the PEC about the care of and maintenance of the historical records and artefacts within the Province, to promote the heritage of the Church and to oversee research.

Ministry was one important strand of Synod. It was proposed that Sr Lorraine Shorten be consecrated a presbyter and this was greeted with acclaim. Another proposal, this time from Church Service Committee asked that the decision to consecrate deacons as presbyters be made by Church Service Committee and PEC alone without needing to come to Synod. This was passed but a great suggestion from the floor of Synod was that the Church develop a formal way of welcoming new ministers who come in to serve the Church and also mark at Synod the presbyter(s) who have been consecrated in the inter-synodal period. A proposal that created much debate was one that asked Finance Committee to come up with a rate for London weighting for stipendiary ministers and lay workers. Some argued that it would

change the idea of equality of pay for all ministers whilst others said it would bring more parity as living costs were more expensive in London. This proposal was passed.

Another well debated proposal was that the Moravian Church divest from any investments in fossil fuels. It was pointed out that the ethical investment policy of the Church already excluded fossil fuel companies, but the proposal was still debated and voted on to give a clear signal of the Church's intentions with regard to the catastrophic effects of climate change.

Also on the subject of climate change was the proposal from the Mission and Society Committee about planting trees. They proposed that the Church, nationally, at congregation level and individual members review the land they have and see if any of this land can be used for planting native trees. The aim is to join with charities who are seeking to increase tree cover in the UK from 13% to 17%. This proposal was also passed and a suggestion was made that a Moravian wood be planted to mark the 300th anniversary of the renewed Moravian Church. Although this suggestion was not part of the proposal it would be wonderful if it could come to fruition.

Outside perspectives came from our three guests. The first was Catherine West MP



A quick break from Synod

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the MP for Hornsey and Wood Green who talked about the reality of child poverty in the United Kingdom. This continued the work of highlighting the issue of poverty that has been so important to many in the Moravian Church. Br Volker Schulz from the European Continental Province brought greetings from the European Province and brought a great sense of perspective when he noted that he lives and works in Switzerland where there are only 130 members of the Moravian Church. He urged us to make use of the Daily Watchwords in our planning for Project 32 and told us that 35,000 copies of the Daily Watchwords are sold in Switzerland - small is not necessarily powerless. Br Thsespal Kundan brought greetings from the Moravian Church in South Asia where they are attempting to create a Mission Province out of the very disparate areas of Ladakh, Assam, Rajpur, Nepal and Myanmar. Br Kundan reminded us of the issue of COVID-19 in South Asia and how it is affecting the congregations there.

The Synod Service was held at 10.30am on the Sunday at Ockbrook on Zoom. It was lovely to see people sharing in this service from across the Province which was led by Br Joachim Kreusel, Synod officials and Br Fred Linyard, and it brought a real feeling of community across the Province.

We owe a real debt of gratitude to the group who gathered in Ockbrook to run the Synod. There was of course the technical company brought in to provide the cameras and microphones and Zoom capacity. However, the chairing panel of Brs Michael Newman and Phil Cooper kept things moving along, Sr Lorraine Parsons was the go to tech person in Ockbrook, Sr Sally Ann Johnston was the Synod Clerk, Sr Jane Dixon was there on behalf of Church Book Committee and as Minutes Secretary, Sr Lindsey Newens was the Synod Steward and Br Joachim Kreusel as minister of the Ockbrook congregation made many of the arrangements and was the go to repair man! Thanks should also go to the Provincial Board for enabling this socially distanced Zoom Synod to go ahead, and to all synodals who engaged so well with this very different yet familiar Synod. Lastly thanks be to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God in community for keeping us in community and communion.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team

Letter to the Editorial Team

Fetter Lane Memories

I was very interested in the article '80 years on from an Inferno' by Sarah Groves in the May 2021 Messenger.

It brought back memories of going to the unveiling of the plaque to mark the site on 9th May 1992. I had been invited to write and say a prayer at the ceremony.

My husband Charles, Sr Mary France and I went by day return train from Leeds and arriving in Fetter Lane took refuge in a pub from the gale force wind and rain! The office building was open and we gathered in the foyer. I don't remember but I think there must have been some sort of get-together afterwards as Moravian ceremonies are always accompanied by food?!

One thing has remained in my mind. The actual site of the destroyed building was pinpointed by Br Bob Burd from his memory of a view from the office window where he used to work! This meant that he must have worked there before WW2.

I rang Bob's daughter Sue, and not only did she confirm this but sent me a lovely account of how they met and the part Fetter Lane played in their relationship and I am enclosing it with this letter.

A final thought. How important 'happenstance' is in all our lives?

Sr Sheila Mitchell



Bob and Eva's wedding - Christmas Eve 1942

© Sr Susan Burd

How My Mum Met My Dad

Fetter Lane was how my mum met my dad ... Bob Burd. When my dad left Tollington Boys School in about 1936 he would've been 17 years old. He lived in Hornsey where he was a member of the Moravian Church and he got a job as a book keeper at Church House in Fetter Lane.

Meanwhile, in Woodford Halse, a village near Daventry in Northamptonshire, my mum had started going to the Moravian Church there with her sister. Aged about 16, my mum was sent to London to be a nanny in Beckenham. She decided she would visit Church House in Fetter Lane and she was shown around by a young Bob Burd.

Not so long after this the war broke out. My dad joined up and my grandmother didn't like her daughter being in London so sent for her to return home to Woodford Halse. My dad was posted to an army base near Daventry where he

manned searchlights. He realised he was near enough to Woodford Halse to go to church there. My mum and her sister sat behind him at the evening service and she recognised the back of his head as the young man who had shown her around Church House in Fetter Lane. Her family started to invite him to tea before church services and the rest, as they say, is history.

They married at Woodford Halse Moravian Church on Christmas Eve 1942. My dad had got 2 days special leave to get married as his company was being posted to Burma on Boxing Day. On Christmas Day he got mumps and so couldn't go to Burma. The rest of his company were killed there.

50 years on ... Bob was minister of Fetter Lane Congregation in Chelsea having begun his career as a teenage book keeper at Fetter Lane Church in the City.

Sr Susan Burd

Synod's little helpers ▶



View of Synod from the Balcony ▼



Provincial Synod 2021 Online

▼ Lighting in place



▶ Sunday Worship Service at Ockbrook - before

◀ Chair and Vice-Chair keeping order

▶ Cake for the 100th Provincial Synod!

▼ Cake for the host's birthday



▲ Sunday Worship Service at Ockbrook - after



▲ Pew-propper and repair man setting up

◀ Making room for the equipment

▲ Camera equipment in place



Central Committee Decisions

Each year the MWA holds an annual Central Committee meeting to decide the Projects that the MWA will support. The theme which will be reflected upon in our monthly Devotional papers, the annual MWA Day and at the Retreat and of course the all-important elections to the Executive Committee. For those of you not familiar with the MWA, there are two committees which run the MWA. The Executive Committee consists of seven Sisters elected from within the membership - generally this committee meets twice a year. The Central Committee consists of the Executive members plus one Sister from each of the Districts. This role rotates around each Circle in the District so every Circle has an opportunity to send a representative to the Central Committee at some point. In effect this means that every Sister in the MWA will hopefully have an opportunity to attend Central Committee and participate in the decision-making of the MWA. The Moravian Church's representative to the 'World Day of Prayer' organisation also has a seat on the Committee and this year, for the first time we were pleased to welcome a representative of 'The Seedlings' our online Circle.

Elections

Like many committees, the MWA struggles to find people who are willing and able to take up roles on the Executive Committee. This year it was necessary to elect a new President and a new Home and Overseas Secretary as both Sisters in these roles (myself and Sr Naomi Barker) had served their maximum terms. Sr Gillian Taylor was elected as President and I was elected as Home and Overseas Secretary for the next three years commencing in September 2021. Whilst obviously happy that these important roles are filled, we now require a treasurer (Sr Taylor is our current treasurer) and it would be good to have fresh perspectives at both Executive and Central Committee meetings.

Theme

Suggestions for themes come from the Circles via the District Representatives. Central Committee discuss all the suggestions and decide upon which idea we will use. This year there were three separate suggestions that the devotional papers reflect upon climate change and the environment. We eventually settled on the title of 'Dreams and Visions'; a title which we felt could incorporate environmental concerns as well as other ideas suggested by other Circles. Sr Diane Thornton will now produce nine papers on this theme, and it will be explored during the Retreat and by our keynote speaker at next year's Away Day.

Projects

This is the part of the meeting which generally takes up the most time. Central Committee receives many suggestions for charities to support both from within the membership and from the PEC. There is always money in the project fund to make immediate payments to various causes or projects and a decision has to be taken regarding what projects the MWA membership will work towards. From £5,000, Central Committee decided to make the following payments: £1,000 to replenish the Disaster Fund; £500 to be sent to each of the following: Unity Women's Desk (UWD) fund to keep 12 Masai girls in education, to support the Moravian presence in Myanmar, for the registration of programmes in Clinical Medicine and Pharmacy at the University in Western Tanzania and finally to Research for Dementia; £250 to each of the following: help complete the church building at Khokona in Nepal, to help complete the external fittings of a new Kindergarten building at Star Mountain Rehabilitation Centre, ME Association, Tabby's Trust (Children's Brain Tumour Research), Butterflies Mental Health, NW Air Ambulances, Swindon Night Shelter and the Asthma Trust. The following projects will be supported by the MWA during 2021-2022: at least £500 towards the UWD fund for Masai girls; £750 or the British Province's Summer Camp and £750 for Action Medical Research for Children. If you are interested in knowing more about any of the above projects more details will appear in the Home and Overseas papers which will be posted on the MWA page of the British Province's website.

Important dates

Next year's Central Committee will be held on 29th April at Dukinfield Moravian Church. Away Day will be on 30th April hopefully at Fairfield Moravian Church. In September (3rd- 5th) the MWA Retreat on the theme of 'Wonder Women! - Then and Now' will be held at the Briery Retreat Centre, Ilkley. This will be led by Sr Patsy Holdsworth. From 6th-8th May 2022 there will be a Retreat on the theme of 'Dreams and Visions' held at Drumalis, Larne, N. Ireland.

I hope this article has given a flavour of the MWA - if anyone would like more information on anything mentioned above or would like to be involved in the MWA please do not hesitate to contact me via email: janet.cooper@moravian.org.uk.

Sr Janet Cooper
President of the MWA



A Significant Event ...?

Every so often, you are asked to attempt the impossible. Such a task has come most recently to me in a request from the Editorial Team of the Moravian Messenger.

'We are planning future editions of the Messenger, and would very much like to have articles from retired ministers on maybe a specific story or a period of time, or particular role you had that was significant to you. It is a reflective series on a subject that is close to you. It can be lighthearted, or a serious piece, or anything in between!'

My first thought was that the brief is a simple, straightforward matter, but the more I've mulled it over, the more complex it has become. How do I choose just one thing?

I'm now in my 70th year. Agatha Christie gave Miss Marple a wonderful line: 'The good book gives our allotted time as three score years and ten, and I'll soon be on borrowed time!' And as I get older, approaching my 'borrowed time', the more I seem to recall past memories, old friends and former colleagues. There are so many stories and roles that have been significant in my life: family, friends, schooldays, sporting memories, student escapades, magic moments from teaching, church life, times of serious illness, sad times, happy times ... so where should I begin? And more importantly, how much do you need to know - or, indeed, should you know!

I have opted to focus on a two-year period from just over 50 years ago. I thoroughly enjoyed my school days, with many happy memories from the age of five through to eighteen. Lots of friends to remember; some great teachers, and some not so great; some achievements to be proud of, and a number of escapades best forgotten.

From day one until we sat our 'O' levels, we had been pupils. We were told what to do and when to do it. Some teachers ruled us with that metaphorical rod of iron, others were kinder. And then came the sixth form years, and how things changed. Teachers now treated us like young adults, and we subsequently saw them in a different light. They had suddenly become human beings! It was the time when we, the students, began to grow into adulthood, as we were given



new and fresh responsibilities.

There were two tutorial groups at Commonweal School for each year of sixth form studies. 6A and 7A were the arts subjects, 6S and 7S the sciences (which is where I was). In 6S/7S, our tutor was Mr Sharpe. For five years in his chemistry lessons, he had come across as a humourless character, but what a revelation he now was - really encouraging, showing a sense of humour and a new openness towards us.



Similarly with our subject teachers. Mr Greenman (Applied Maths) especially, showed concern for our wholeness of being and social development and not just our academic results. He had a strong but quiet Christian faith, as did Mr Griffiths and Mr Hayward (both Physics), and this showed through in their demeanour and general approach towards us. I learned more about Christian living from my Christian teachers that I ever did in five years of Religious Education lessons that preceded the sixth form!

In year 7 (or year 13 in today's system), more responsibilities were given us. A number of us became prefects - and we elected them from amongst our number. The prefects then elected the school's head boy and head girl, and their deputies. This was very progressive at that time. It had not happened before at Commonweal, so we were trendsetters. House captains were also elected from amongst the year 7 students, by all the members of their house in the whole

school. I was very honoured and humbled to be chosen as Deputy Head Boy and also Captain of Stonehenge House.

There were opportunities to be involved in theatrical productions. Those who have heard my singing voice will be astounded to know that I sang in 'Trial by Jury' by Gilbert and Sullivan (as one of the jurors). I played a small part in year 6 in the French farce, 'The Italian Straw Hat'. In year 7, Mr Gregory chose me for the comic lead in Oliver Goldsmith's 'She Stoops to Conquer', playing Tony Lumpkin. I'm not sure if I was flattered or not by people telling me that I was typecast in the role!

We had a Sixth Form Debating Society, which met monthly on a Friday afternoon in the School Library. It may have been a ploy to shut me up, but I was elected as Chair!

Mrs Anderson had taught me history to 'O' level, and she encouraged me to join in with her 'A' level historians in their marmalade making efforts. Mrs A was, and still is, a champion of Oxfam, and the group used to enjoy our regular social gatherings at her home as we prepared the oranges and stirred the pot and enjoyed each other's company. Again, we saw Christian faith at work, and Oxfam benefitted too. Our marmalade gained quite a reputation.

There were also the sporting activities and playing for school teams. A term of rugby, a term of soccer, and a term of cricket. All very hectic with matches on Saturday mornings and Wednesday afternoons after school. The team captains were given responsibility for team selection and tactics alongside the PE staff. That gave me more to do, as I was appointed captain of the rugby 2nd XV, the football 2nd XI, and the cricket team. I suppose I must have had some leadership potential given all these titles.

continued overleaf

Gomersal

On the 4th April, following the lockdown, we were able to resume our services in Church. We were all socially distanced and wearing masks of course, but it felt as if some normality was finally beginning to happen. We could not sing the hymns but strangely enough it was inspiring to read and absorb the words whilst the music was being played. At the end of the service, we were able to meet with our brothers and sisters outside for a few moments of friendship together.

Easter Sunday saw us all meeting in the burial ground for our early service. It was a fine day and we were able to



© Sr Norma Machell

sing our hymns. The only thing missing was the full English breakfast that the brethren provide, cook and serve. Hopefully, next year it will resume again.

Pentecost Sunday saw us hold our service outside at the front of Church. About 30 people were present to hear Sr Kathryn Woolford lead the service with Br Bob Hopcroft reading from the

Acts of the Apostles.

It was cold and windy, but the rain held off and it was lovely to be able to sing the hymns.

On Sunday, 11th April we were informed that Br Michael Newman and his family were leaving Fulneck and Gomersal to serve the congregation at Hornsey in London. Our best wishes go with Michael, Claire, Daniel and Ethan as they start a new chapter of their lives and we wish them every happiness in their new home.

Sr Norma Machell

Lower Wyke, Yorkshire

In normal times Lower Wyke is a very active congregation. The regular Sunday Services are interspersed with weekly Bible Study, Prayer Group, the sound of Belleplates rehearsing, the talk of all things relating to plant life at Greenfingers and the clink of cutlery and engaging chatter at Community Lunch but, of course, these are not 'normal times'. 2020-2021 has been considerably quieter - hopefully soon to be restored to normal service!

Sr Jane has kept us all connected by continuing to produce our weekly service sheet that she has emailed, hand delivered or posted to all members and friends in the local community: an amazing job! A doorstep visit, when allowed, has meant a lot to some members, especially when delivering The

Messenger, a Christingle or the annual Mothering Sunday flowers. The Pastoral Care Team have made weekly phone calls to members making sure that they can still hear a friendly voice and help can be given where needed.

In June 2020 the Scarecrow Festival took place in a virtual form. People placed their scarecrows in their own gardens and sent a photograph that was displayed on line. This meant that there were scarecrows in Lancashire, Birkenshaw and Wyke as well as Lower Wyke.

At Christmas Sr Jane lead a wonderful Christingle service via Zoom and

several Coffee Mornings have also taken place via the Zoom platform. During the latter we were delighted to welcome the postman and the window cleaner both of whom caused great hilarity.



© Sr Diane Thornton

Easter 2021 saw our beautiful grounds awash with golden daffodils and the setting for actual singing at the early morning service! Looking forward to



the summer and a release of most restrictions we have again planned the Scarecrow Festival when boxed afternoon teas can be eaten on the Paddock, picnic style. Hopefully this will have taken place when you read this. The Strawberry Fair and Proms in the Paddock are also planned for July. Our soloist and band are in rehearsals and flags will be at the ready. Celebration time once more! COVID has taught us much about technology and about the human race. May we learn from it and take it with us, with thanks, as we move forward in faith.

Sr Diane Thornton

Notices



We kindly invite you to

The IX. International Moravian Conference

From September 24 to 26 2021 in Suchdol nad Odrou

With the main topic

300th Birth Anniversary of David Zeisberger, the Apostle of the Indians

other topics:

We will also commemorate 13 anniversaries of other Moravians

We would like to reach out and invite historians, scholars and students wishing to present their works connected to this topic.

In a series of lectures and papers, new findings and information will be presented about Moravian Brethren who left this region at the beginning of the 18th century in order to restore the Brethren unity in Herrnhut. Thus made an indelible mark in the history of our country, therefore, we want to bring their lives closer to the public. A list of these Moravians is to be found at www.moravian.cz.

We welcome presentations, research and contributions on related issues, which will convey and pass on knowledge about the time of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. However, the organizers reserve the privilege to reject presentations which are not related to the topic.

Moravian-The National History Association in Suchdol nad Odrou is preparing an interesting program for the upcoming event. At the Museum of Moravian Brethren, there will be an exposition opened about the Moravians' missionary work. Invitations including a more detailed overview of the conference program will be sent till the end of July 2021.

Applicants wishing to present their papers on the Moravians are kindly asked to register their contributions in advance or to consult them by mailing to daniel.rican@seznam.cz. More information about the conference will be published at www.moravian.cz.

We warmly welcome you and look forward to your participation.

Suchdol nad Odrou, 17.5. 2021

Corrections: the article on the back page of the June issue of the Moravian Messenger was attributed to Br Jared Stephens but was in fact written by Br Henry Wilson.

A Significant Event ...? continued from page 81

It was also a period during which the local football team, Swindon Town, were enjoying heady days. The famous win at Wembley over Arsenal in the 1969 League Cup Final and promotion to what was then the Second Division (now the Championship), was followed by a great season which nearly saw promotion to the top division. That created a buzz around the school.

Needless to say, something had to give with all this activity going on, and I must confess that it was my academic studies

that suffered. I was always capable of 'getting by' with the minimum of effort, and that's how my sixth form academic days ended - I got by. I know that I could have done much better if I had concentrated more in my studies; but if I had, that would then most surely have changed the whole subsequent pathway that has been my life. And I wouldn't have had the opportunity to develop the life skills that all these other activities provided.

Sixth form days. Two great years in which

we all grew up. From troublesome pupils, we became young adults, learning responsibilities in life from the examples shown to us by our teachers, some of whom became respected friends.

The happiest days of my life? Certainly those sixth form days rank amongst them.

Br David Newman



From Church House

Provincial Diary for July

15-16 Provincial Board Meeting

6	Martyrdom of Jan Hus at Constance in 1415
11	Sea Sunday (www.seasundayhero.org)
17	World Day for International Justice
20	Eid-ul-Adha - Muslim
30	World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

Dates to remember!

Congregational Register

Deaths

22nd April 2021	Mary Abbott	Fairfield
24th April 2021	Betty Lewin	Lower Wyke
6th May 2021	Charles Ellor	Fairfield
7th May 2021	Margaret Saxon Godsall	Fairfield
21st May 2021	Kathleen Elizabeth Williams	Swindon
2nd June 2021	Sylvia Julia Courtney	Gracehill
5th June 2021	Marie Rose	Ockbrook

Cliftonville Moravian Church

Cliftonville Moravian Church began in the Shankill Road district as a Home Mission for Moravians who moved to find work in Belfast. Some attended the new Church built in University Road in 1887. In 1890, cottage meetings were held in the area, then a room was hired and a home missionary appointed.

The room in a hall in Huss Street had a Lamb and Flag but had no earlier Moravian connections. In 1839 a Church of Ireland rector, Rev Thomas Drew, built three Prayer House/Schools and named them after reformers. Wycliffe became St Matthew's Parish Hall, Luther a church in Whiterock, Cranmer was intended for the Falls Road but never built, and Huss Street School later became an Orange Hall where the Moravians rented the room.

By 1891 it was clear that a Moravian building was needed and a site in Perth Street was chosen with a plan for a day and Sunday School on the ground floor and a church above. Work began on 20th January 1893 and the opening service was held on 18th June that year.

In 1905, the Irish District Conference considered building a church in a developing area, and by September 1909 Cliftonville Moravian Church was completed and situated on the Oldpark Road. The school continued at Perth Street and the building was used for evening meetings. Civil unrest in 1920/21 caused members to make detours to attend church. A wooden building was erected behind Cliftonville for Sunday School and weeknight activities in 1926 and Perth Street School was transferred to the Education Authority. Cliftonville Home Mission was recognised as a Moravian congregation in 1930.

World War Two brought air-raids to Belfast in 1941 and families were evacuated; the church and manse were damaged and the hall and homes completely destroyed. Services resumed when the majority of members came back to the city, though some had to settle at a distance from the congregation.

1969 brought more political unrest, with violence that lasted for more than 30 years, but church life and most activities carried on and good relationships continued in the community around the church. A handicraft group provided a meeting place for Moravian ladies and Roman Catholic neighbours as did a junior youth club for children. Hospital and other visiting were difficult when roads were closed to traffic. Internment, on 9th August 1971, led to rioting and many houses were burned nearby.

Today the area near the church is peaceful. A Presbyterian, two Churches of Ireland and a Methodist church closed due to declining membership, and two Catholic churches due to building faults, leaving one Catholic and Cliftonville Moravian in our local area.



© Br John Cooper

Our small congregation remains in good heart. When our organist moved to England, we did not see any hope of replacing her but were soon singing accompanied by our Hymnal Machine. During COVID we do not sing, so music is played at intervals during the service; we look forward to the day when we can sing again.

We were involved in district and other events during 2020. On 2nd February the 4 Corners (of Belfast) Festival was broadcast live on Radio Ulster from our well filled church. The theme was 'Building a City of Grace' and shared by people from many denominations in the city.

We lunched in the Golf Club after church on 8th March but little thought that two Sundays later we would be in lockdown and isolated in our homes. Br Stephens began to plan Zoom services and Bible studies to be shared by Ballinderry and Cliftonville. American members of Br Stephen's earlier church joined us. We use WhatsApp to share photographs and information, and Beth Stewart offered to send out the Watchwords each morning. Zoom games nights for the younger group were held and even a Lovefeast, with the origin and meaning explained for those for whom it was a new experience. We were grateful to American Moravian ministers who took Zoom services for us at 6 am USA time. Ginger Bread House making took place in Advent. Christmas shoe boxes and blankets and jumpers were supplied for less fortunate children abroad and gifts for a Wives' Refuge. Cliftonville shared in the preparations for the final District event of 2020, the memorable outdoor Christingle Service in Ballymena.

When Br Jared Stephens became the minister of Ballinderry and Cliftonville at the end of 2018 he was keen to be responsible for services in both churches each Sunday. Now we are back in church after lockdown, Ballinderry service is at 10 am and Cliftonville at 11.30 am and we are looking forward to the day when we can again meet for coffee and a chat before the service.

Sr Edna Cooper

The Moravian Messenger

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

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

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Contributions for the Messenger should reach the editorial team by the 7th day of the preceding month.

Design & Artwork
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