



A year like no other

- A Primary School
in COVID Times



© Sr Sarah Groves

There is a phrase that you've heard many times to describe the last 12 months - 'a year like no other.' In Gracehill Primary School we would agree.

Our School and Nursery Unit are located in the historic village of Gracehill in beautiful County Antrim, Northern Ireland. There are 415 boys and girls attending our Primary School from age 4 to 11 and in the Nursery there are 26 boys and girls preparing to join us in Primary 1. In total 50 adults work in our school on a daily basis to support the boys and girls in their learning, to keep the children safe and to feed the boys and girls (and staff!) at lunchtime.

So, as you can appreciate as we all gathered round our televisions in March 2020 to listen to the Prime Minister announce a national lockdown, the implications for us as for everyone else in the country were huge and unprecedented.

The challenge was significant; however, in Gracehill we have a wonderful team of teachers and support staff who are so adaptable - they needed to be! The staff, working remotely, prepared lessons for the children to work on at home. While the familiar pattern of daily life in school stopped at lockdown, the school building remained open for the children of key workers who were able to come into school for supervised learning.

As the days and weeks passed a new pattern emerged of children uploading their work to their teachers and receiving feedback. We were very aware that families were in very different situations and some parents were adept at home schooling and its demands while others struggled.

It also became clear that many of the events that we enjoy so much like school trips, sports days and end of year concerts weren't going to be possible during lockdown. So the Primary Sevens who were to leave us in June could not enjoy the usual fun but instead participated in a virtual end of year concert which was well received by all. Everyone took part in a virtual sports day and uploaded their videos to their class for everyone to see how they got on in the back gardens! An important aspect of school life is welcoming the new boys and girls who are joining us in Primary 1. Usually we invite the boys and girls to our induction afternoon with their class teacher. This was another

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Following the Lamb

Am I the only minister to dread the coming of September? We are coming to the end of 18 months of restrictions and things are looking to go back to normal. Over the past 18 months we have learnt to do many things differently and much of what we have learnt is beneficial. I am sure that many meetings will continue on Zoom and that will cut down on travel and time taken up by travelling. We have learnt to communicate with each other in our congregations in new ways, filming and Zooming services, emailing and posting information out to people. We don't necessarily want to lose these forms of service. But it has taken time to do these things.

Now we are back to more or less normal my fear is twofold. One is that we will all be expected to keep the good things that we have done during COVID times along with all the other things that come along with congregational and pastoral ministry. Of course, September is when congregational work returns at full pace after a summer break and very quickly we are into the manic season that pre-Christmas has become. How will we cope?

My second fear is that the world has changed around us and we have not fully understood its implications for churches. There is evidence from other denominations that the COVID break has caused people to reassess their priorities. It seems that folk have felt that COVID has given them an opportunity to step down from various responsibilities particularly in children's work. So, we may well be short of people to run the children's activities we are used to. Secondly, will children want to come back to the activities and teaching that we used to offer them;

increasingly children are asked by their parents what do they want to do - and what if they don't want to come back to what we provide - and that has been an increasing trend over the past 20 years. Thirdly, because it has been so difficult for families to come to Church many families have got used to having Sunday morning as family time, a more leisurely time than before COVID. What can we do to attract them back?

My feeling is that we are going to have to look at how we present the Gospel and how and when we worship, in new and attractive ways to a new world. I don't want to throw the baby out with the bath water but it is a challenge for all of us. Change is easy to advocate but hugely difficult to achieve because so many of us love the routines and traditions and gain great comfort from them.

I have no magic solutions, but I do gain strength from reflecting on the two images of the Lamb and Flag that our Churches internationally use as our symbol. One has the Lamb confidently striding into the future and we are called to follow where the Lamb leads. The other image of the Lamb has the Lamb looking back at the flock who are following, perhaps to see how they are doing. We are called to follow the conquering Lamb, but in truth Jesus does look back and care about his flock and their struggles. Let us trust for the future in the Lamb who is also the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep.



Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team

Letter to the Editorial Team

I was warmed to read the reminiscences of retired Minister Br David Newman reflecting on his school days in Swindon. As a fellow Robins fan, I was glad to know he was inspired by their successes on the football team, as having lived and worked in the town, I recognise the effect of the team's performances on the local outlook and demeanour.

Was very interested to note the evolution of relationships between teachers and learners, not to mention the prevalence of extracurricular activities and the responsibilities that came with them. Current regimes of learning and assessment may have reduced the incentives, and flexibility, to include such variety as part of school life. Nonetheless, I thank the author for highlighting the broader influence of these experiences. Moreover, at this time of the year, when exam results are very much on the minds

of students and their parents, it is good to be reminded that the results are by no means final. There will be many future opportunities to learn, to grow, for recognition and of course; to contribute to communities both locally and in the wider world. While it is a great goal to strive for excellence, hopefully in the process you will discover that your grades are like a shadow on the wall behind you, in terms of your overall achievements. Use them to help you focus, improve and do better. Beware the temptation to inflate their value and see them as an end in themselves.

Thanks again to Br Newman for his thoughtful memories.

Br Herbert Daly

Fetter Lane

It takes a church to raise a parent

The online conference I attended in May had a session led by Rachel Turner author of a book with this title. I have heard her speak before and her enthusiasm and realism about the work of a Children's and Youth Worker is thought provoking. The talk was a short introduction to many of the elements of the book. I will try to do justice to her thinking in this article.

The Bible implores us to teach our children God's commandments (Deuteronomy 6:6-7) and although we may make a nod to this, we sometimes don't really know how to do this, and parents sometimes feel it is one more thing on their 'to do' list. As a church we may invest in programmes, holiday clubs, etc. for children forgetting that the primary discipleship of children is at home, in everyday life. The church as a community can support parents in this but often this is interpreted by giving them lots of materials for faith at home, providing 'experts' in church, and this may mean parents feel they are not up to the task. The work of the church should be to help parents walk alongside their children in their faith journey and be authentic about their own faith.

For this to happen there needs to be a shift in the way churches approach work with children. These are:

- **Fight against expert culture** - parents sometimes expect the church 'experts' to be responsible for their children's faith journey, BUT parents are the experts in their own children, and spend far more time with them than any church worker could. Experts need to serve the parents and journey alongside them in this adventure.
- **Change from activity/homework to discipleship.** Think of an ongoing coaching session, we teach our children how to behave by modelling it, doing it day in day out, not even really thinking about it, showing faith should be the same. Parents don't need to set aside a 20-minute slot every day, expensive resources are not needed, but helping children to encounter God in the everyday is something we may need to help parents with.
- **Learn spiritual parenting** - in the past, generations and different families may be together and day by day parents can see how others 'do it'. This coaching can begin before parenthood with older children discipling the

younger, and everyone feeling involved in the responsibility of raising children in the faith. However, it is never too early, or too late to start doing this work. It should be remembered that you never stop parenting (believe me!) and we can resource parents and grandparents by being alongside them.

The problem with all this is trying to sell the vision. Rachel compares a trip to the dentist, which everyone dreads and isn't



usually an experience that makes you happy to a trip to IKEA where you get the opportunity to see how things might be arranged to make a home, and generally it sells you a lifestyle (I know some of you hate IKEA but ...). IKEA supplies a vision of how things can be, this is what we need to do for parents in our communities. This is not an instant fix but with a determination and long-range view (ten years is not unreasonable) your church community can be somewhere parents are equipped to raise people of faith. It must not be 'more things we (as parents) have to do at home' but 'oh that is easy I hadn't thought of doing it that way'. Sharing stories of simple ways God is made visible in everyday life, how connections to God are made naturally and how enthusiasm for Christianity is shared, and how our faith is integral in all we do. Sharing struggles, when things go wrong, and being truthful about your own faith journey reassures others that they don't always need to get it right, and that we

all go wrong from time to time.

There are some simple tools that can be used:

- Create windows - show your life with God.
- Frame things - this is what you are looking at.
- Unwind misplaced views of God - wondering together.
- Help children to find an authentic voice - to use and be listened to.
- Surf the waves of children's lives - help them to understand the ups and downs of life and of faith.

In an intergenerational church this can be something shown to one another, exercising these tools together in church, not just parents but everyone. It is important to make sure we don't give children tools their parents are not sure of, we need to work in partnership. Gathering parents together to give them support, not just information but time together sharing stories, parents learning from other parents and one to one support when it is needed.

There is no one right way to parent for faith - every parent, every child, every family unit is unique and what works for one will not work for another. Parents need to be asked what they need, not told what they should do, given options and guidance, encouragement that they are the best people to disciple their children. We may feel a call to serve the children and young people of the church doesn't include parents, but it is only by working with parents we can build a faithful community of all ages.

Buy the book here:
<https://parentingforfaith.org/resource/it-takes-church-raise-parent-book>

Listen to Rachel Turner - Dentist vs IKEA here: <https://parentingforfaith.org/post/dentist-vs-ikea>

More help for parents and churches from <https://parentingforfaith.org/> including links to the key tools - Creating windows, Framing, Unwinding, Chat and Catch, and Surfing the Waves - and to the parenting course.

Sr Joy Raynor
Provincial Youth and Children's Officer

A year like no other *continued*

event that was not possible. However, we had a drive-through induction where the boys and girls came with their adults to our school playground and drove around the school grounds to meet with their class teachers and assistants! We, like all schools, had to come up with creative and innovative solutions at very short notice!

And so, the school year ended in June with uncertainty as to how the new year would resume. Guidance came in from the Department of Education and Department of Health in Northern Ireland in mid-August and that was when each school had to implement this guidance for the unique circumstances of each setting. We were delighted that we were able to resume in September with our full classes attending every day but there were many changes. In order to achieve social distancing in a large Primary School we had to look at movement of pupils around the school and identify pinch points and work out where children could wash their hands. Because there is only one entrance into and out of the school grounds, with over 400 pupils and parents using it we had to move to staggered start and finish times. We implemented class bubbles to prevent any possible movement of the virus from one class to another. To achieve this the staff gave up their breaks and stayed with their class all day to avoid breaking the bubbles. Even lunches had to be eaten in the classrooms.

In education, we always try and reflect on what has been and see how we can improve going forward. So, in the autumn term of 2020 we implemented a new home school link website called 'seesaw' which enabled direct access between class teacher and adults at home and children if they were at home. This proved essential. On occasions a class bubble had to self-isolate due to a positive COVID-19 case in their class. This meant the class had to stay at home and the teacher had to immediately switch to remote learning via 'seesaw' for a fortnight.

One important aspect of school life that we were unable to resume was our school assembly but many of our visiting speakers recorded messages for us which we were able to view in each classroom.

Throughout the autumn term there was much discussion about a circuit break or a mini lockdown. The half term at the end of October was extended by a week in an attempt to break the transmission of the virus. This time was appreciated by all as it was a very challenging start to the school year.

Christmas in Gracehill is usually a full of activity with our school fair and the switch on of the village lights, Christmas plays and a carol service in Church. Sadly, this was not possible; however, the boys and girls recorded their Christmas items and carols for adults and parents to view on YouTube.

Over Christmas it became clear that a new variant of the virus

was emerging. We were hopeful for a short lockdown - perhaps a week or a fortnight. Unfortunately, a longer lockdown was necessary. And so, the classes reverted to home learning and school again provided supervised learning for the children of key workers. All classes used 'seesaw' for remote learning during the lockdown at the start of 2021.

In March, we were able to welcome some of our boys and girls back to school as the lockdown gradually eased. Just before Easter all the classes came back to school but again we had to keep to classroom bubbles and staggered starts to the school day. The safest place to be, was outside with plenty of fresh air. There's plenty of fresh air in Gracehill! All of our pupils go out for a walk each day around the perimeter of our school grounds. This public walkway has been developed by the Gracehill Village Association and the Church. We are really fortunate to have this facility. We also made great use of the village square in Gracehill for rounders, cricket or just out for a walk around the pond.

This summer over the school holidays we were pleased to be able to offer our boys and girls a summer scheme led by some of our teachers. It was a great opportunity for the children to reconnect after multiple lockdowns and isolation.

Though the past 15 months have brought much change and uncertainty it's wonderful to look around the historic village of Gracehill with the amazing old buildings and beautiful Church. It is good to pause and reflect on how some things don't change and remain a constant in our lives.

Our Board of Governors, chaired by Bishop Sarah Groves, continued to meet over Zoom throughout the pandemic. We hope to have face to face meetings this new autumn term. Support from the Board of Governors has been more important than ever in these extremely challenging times.

We look forward with hope and confidence to better days ahead. Undoubtedly there will be further challenges - but in Gracehill Primary School we will continue to be guided by our school motto: 'Caring, Learning, Achieving: Together.'

Robert McCombe

Principal, Gracehill Primary School

Gracehill Primary School was originally a Moravian School but is now a School within the state education system in Northern Ireland, however Gracehill Moravian Church has the right to nominate Church members to act as school governors.



The Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland (British Province) - Reconstitution of the Provincial Elder's Conference (PEC)

Following Synod, PEC met in July to formally reconstitute.

The Provincial Board (PEC), in being elected, are elected as Trustees of The Choir House, Fulneck School, Ockbrook School and the Moravian Union Incorporated which includes the Moravian Church, the Estates Property Portfolio and The British Mission Board in compliance with the Charity Commissioners. In addition, the Provincial Board act as Directors of the Moravian Union Incorporated as regulated by Companies House and each hold one share in the Company whilst in office. Br David Howarth has been appointed as Company Secretary.

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

The Provincial Board

Chair: Sr Roberta Hoey

Treasurer: Br Livingstone Thompson

Secretary: Br David Howarth

Chair of Estates Property: Br David Howarth and Br Michael Newman

School Leads for Fulneck School: Br Peter Gubi and Br Paul Holdsworth

Sr Roberta Hoey represents the British Province on Unity Board of the Worldwide

Moravian Church and currently represents the European Region on the Unity Executive.

The Unity Synod has entrusted oversight of the work of the Moravian Church in the South Asia Mission Province to The Mission Board and has a close relationship with the Western Province of Tanzania as agreed by the Unity Mission Agencies.

The British Mission Board will formally reconstitute in September 2021.

Ockbrook School ('the Company') has ceased trading and is now closed. The Company was placed into Administration on 28th July 2021.

Retirement of Br Martin Smith

Br Martin Smith became an ordained minister in the Moravian Church in September 2017, and he retires from stipendiary ministry at the end of August this year. Martin has served in the Lancashire District, as minister of our Salem and Royton congregations, and his ministry has been greatly appreciated.

Martin was born in Leicester and his father was a Congregational minister. Martin studied engineering at Leeds University, and then trained to be a physics teacher at Bath University. While at Leeds, he came to a personal faith in Jesus. Also at Leeds, he encountered the spirituality of the Focolare Movement, an ecumenical renewal movement, which originated in the Roman Catholic Church. He has also taught in a Special Needs Department in a large comprehensive school in Swindon, and worked in a small home improvements business, training to be a plumber and heating engineer.

Martin was accepted for training for ordained ministry in the United Reformed Church (URC), and studied at Mansfield College, in Oxford. It was here that he met his future wife, Kirsty, whilst she also was training as a URC minister. Martin became stepfather to Kirsty's two boys, Llywelyn and Iwan. Among his lecturers were Rowan Williams (later Archbishop of Canterbury) and Tom Wright (prominent Biblical scholar and author).



Martin went on a three-week residential course in the Holy Land and had a one-year placement in a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) in Reading. After completing his training as an ordinand, Martin spent eight months at the Focolare school for priests and ministers in Tuscany. Martin has served three churches in Cheshire (1996-2003), two churches in Blackburn (2003-2011), one church in Stockport (2011-2013) and churches in Didsbury and Chorlton-Cum-Hardy (2013-2015).

It has been a delight to work alongside Martin, both within the Lancashire District and in the Province. Martin is the Secretary of our Provincial Faith & Order

& Ecumenical Relations Committee, and it was particularly enjoyable for me to work with Martin on a series of articles we wrote together for the 'Moravian Messenger', on the subject of human sexuality, marriage and the URC book, 'One Plus One - Thinking Together About Marriage.'

Martin is a knowledgeable and deeply spiritual person, who is always ready to listen, thoughtfully and respectfully, to the points of view of other people, even if those views are different to his own. His love, wisdom and pastoral support have been extremely valuable to me and many other people. Martin has wholeheartedly embraced the ethos of the Moravian Church, sharing some very helpful observations about the richness of our theology and traditions, from the perspective of someone whose faith has been shaped by a different Christian denomination.

We are all deeply grateful to Martin for his contribution to the Moravian Church and are also glad that Martin will continue to serve on the Provincial Faith & Order & Ecumenical Relations Committee and will be available to help with the conducting of worship services, and other ministerial matters, in the Lancashire District and beyond.

Br Philip Cooper

Minister at Fairfield Moravian Church

Impressions of Synod

As my first time, representing Gracehill at Synod, I wasn't totally sure what to expect, particularly in this unusual year. This was the delayed Synod due to having to be cancelled last year and was mostly virtual on Zoom. So, most of the delegates were 'Zooming' from home with 'mission control' at Ockbrook where a team of around 15 led the proceedings. As with previous more-normal Synods, there was a mix of reports, proposals and elections. Booklets covering the agenda, reports, proposals and nominations were posted out in advance allowing for preparation to understand the order and volume of business. This was very welcome for a newbie like me. but I was also well briefed beforehand by a well-seasoned delegate, Sr Sarah Groves. So, I wasn't totally green on the first day but there was some trepidation as proceedings kicked off. There was also an online repository available for updated documents during Synod and I found this really valuable, particularly for finding the more obscure documents.

Each morning started with a short service delivered by a wide range of speakers and setting us up nicely for a day of business with some inspiring words. The first morning service was led by Br Martin Smith with a refreshing and uplifting message of love. Each day was divided into 6 one-hour sessions, with 15 minutes essential breaks for coffee and one hour for lunch. This format worked well and provided breaks from screen time. Online meeting can be very difficult, particularly later in the day.

My very first impressions were of a well-oiled machine, ably chaired by Br Michael Newman and Br Philip Cooper, supported by a superb technical team, including our own Sr Sally Ann, and led by the members of the Provincial Elders Committee (PEC). Br Newman was excellent as the chair: controlling proceedings precisely and gently, moving proceedings along. Br Cooper supported well and as chair for next year, we will be in good hands. Sr Roberta Hoey, one of the full-time members of PEC, used her encyclopaedic knowledge of everything Moravian to

answer the continuous stream of questions from the floor. I felt really well blessed to have such a likeable yet very able team to guide us through Synod.

Throughout proceedings there was a mix of interesting and important reports. Much of the news was good, such as that of the British Mission Board with great work in India and Africa. However, some was not so good, and the shock of the Synod was the news that Ockbrook School is likely to close. We were all rather stunned, but it was apparent from the reports that this difficult decision is necessary despite the best efforts of PEC and School staff. Pre-COVID, finances were tight and manageable but, as with so much, the pandemic was the final nail. Student numbers are down significantly, income is down, and debts are growing so difficult to see any way back. So, so sad to witness the demise of a great Moravian education establishment considering the pioneering work in education by early Moravians such as John Comenius: the father of modern education.

The other reports presented cover much of the important business of Mission, Faith & Order, Youth Work and of course Finance. Of all of these, there is an exciting new development, Project 32, so expect to hear a lot more of this. This is really the Church Plan for the next ten years seeking to strengthen the Church, expand Evangelism and restructure for sustainable growth. It links beautifully with the tri-centenary of the first missionaries from Hernhut in 1732. This work is ambitious and wide-ranging, marking a 'Decade of Celebration and Renewal' and will be really good for our Church Province. Plans are still rather sketchy, but we will all have an opportunity for contribution. It is being led by Br Livingstone Thompson and I was very pleasantly surprised by his commitment and passion for the project. This will go a long way in ensuring success.

Lots of proposals are another key set of items presented throughout Synod. These

ranged from routine to vitally important, from anodyne to controversial and with some engaging debate. I participated in several of the debates but there was two that stood out for me: London Allowance and Divestment in Fossil Fuels. The London Allowance proposal was to supplement the stipend of ministers in London who are struggling financially due to the meagre stipends provided. This was a lively debate, with some arguing that this removed equality. Like many, I was of the view that this maintained equal provisions based upon need. Thankfully, this was passed but not without a few votes against.

The Divestment proposal was very interesting and proposed with the best of intent but not well thought through. All of us can contribute to the idea that our Church must invest ethically and that nowadays that means disinvesting in fossil-fuel companies. However, the proposers also wished to include congregations no longer using fossil fuels: for Gracehill this would mean either a very expensive switchover or a cold church. The main proposal was passed but without the additional bits about not using fossil fuels. This is particularly difficult for us in Northern Ireland where the majority of home heating is using oil (kerosene) and there is no drop-in renewable fuel available.

There was also great debate around a proposal by Br Blair Kessler to introduce proportional representation with a single transferrable vote process. The idea was to reduce multiple rounds of voting for various elections. We, in Northern Ireland, are well aware of the pros and cons of this system and how difficult a decision like this can be. This was well explained by Br Blair and was an interesting debate. I found myself very torn on this as, I'm sure, so were others. Eventually, the vote decided against but was quite close run so we may hear more of this at future Synods.

Perhaps the most amusing observation on the proposals was associated with the voting. Most were passed with large

majorities with only a few failing but I noted that on every single proposal (no matter how uncontentious) there was always at least two votes against. I hope that this is not the case, but it did appear that there were two delegates who voted against everything no matter what. I found it amusing that two delegates were no, no, no to everything: no to London Allowance, no to Project 32, no to a Tree Campaign, always no, no, no.

The last set of items, peppered throughout the sessions on the last two days were the elections. There were many positions to fill: full-time PEC, part-time PEC, Finance, Church Service, Youth, etc. I counted a total of 19 individual elections and, initially, I was concerned that there were insufficient nominations. My fears were allayed as more good quality nominations flooded in and it was really gratifying to see such a good group of well-qualified and very capable candidates. When voting, I was praying thank you Lord for looking after our wee church with so many good candidates and that we are in such good hands.

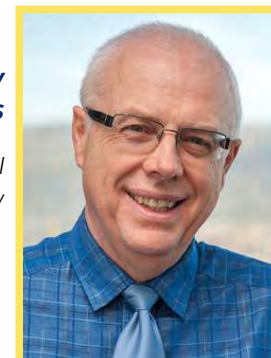
Finally, I must say that I really enjoyed my introduction to Synod: although not the one that I had expected when elected to represent Gracehill. Debate was good, the vision and future for our church looks sound and I appreciated this opportunity to understand the running of our Church Province. I did miss the experience of a full Synod but God-willing and with the support of our congregation, I would hope to return in 2022.

I believe that God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is with us and will remain with us during these difficult times.

God Bless.

Br Roy Douglas

*Gracehill
Synod Deputy*



Original Synod

As I write this, six weeks have passed since Synod took place online for the first time ever. The gap has given me time to reflect and put together a few thoughts about my experience of Synod 2021.

The first thing to say is that it was a success, which, considering the shambles of the online rehearsal, was a great surprise. Because the team in Ockbrook listened to feedback and made changes to the format, the actual sessions went well. Technically it was a triumph. None of us would have expected at the start of 2020 that we would have the ability to prepare and produce a full Synod online. To have done so is a testament to the organising team.

The standard of chairing sessions was outstanding. As a past chair of Synod I know how challenging it is when faced with a room full of synodals. I can only imagine how much more difficult it was to only see faces on a screen. Thanks are due to Brs Michael and Philip for keeping their cool and keeping the business flowing.

Thanks too to Sr Lorraine Shorten for hosting the evening fellowship meetings. I have always relished the social side of Synod, the sleepy greetings at breakfast, the lunchtime chats, the conversations at the bar in the evening, were, of course, missing this year so the evening sessions were appreciated by those who joined in.

Of course, Synod was dominated by the sad news about the schools but there were moments of joy as well. The election of a full Provincial Board was, for me, a real highlight. The day-to-day business and planning of the church is vital and for too long has fell on too few shoulders. So, in gratitude to the new board, we gave them a real task by approving

Project 32! This sets out a challenging programme for the whole church and the PEC are mandated to report back to Synod 2022 which means a full year for those involved.

Much of the business was just that, business. Motions which had to be brought to Synod to improve our methods. However, there were two motions about minimum numbers for church council quorums and representation at Synod that will make huge changes to our smaller congregations.

The debates were lively with many of the 'usual subjects' speaking regularly. I, of course, include myself in that number. Gratifyingly many others poked their heads over the parapet to share their insight on matters. One of the difficulties I experienced was being unable to confer with my seconder during a debate on a motion we were sponsoring. However, that was about the only drawback of being 'virtual' when it came to conducting business. Of course, I never want to hear 'you're muted' ever again!

Synod 2021 was, indeed, a success. The embodiment of the mindset that says, 'here is a problem and this is the way we will tackle it'. That attitude gave us all the opportunity to be a part of the decision-making of the Moravian Church. That mindset and that attitude will serve the church well in the other challenges we face.

So, thank you, to the organisers and we will see you all in 2022. In person? Hopefully!

Br Blair Kessler

*Hall Green
Synod Deputy*



Holy Habits

- Missional Discipleship Resources for Churches



At our recent Provincial Synod, the following proposal was carried:

That the Provincial Elders Conference adopt Holy Habits as an integral part of Project 32 (the decade celebrating the tri-centenary of the renewal of the Moravian Church and Moravian missions), authorise a working group to take forward Holy Habits in the Province and in the congregations, and arrange for each congregation to have a set of Holy Habits books.

Holy Habits is a set of books published by the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF). It is a collection of material which seeks to nurture Christian discipleship within congregations. It looks at the model of church found in Acts 2:42-47, and identifies ten aspects of church life described in that Biblical passage, which it calls, 'Holy Habits'. The material is designed to help explore and deepen these Habits in our own lives and the life of our churches. These Holy Habits are:

- Biblical Teaching
- Serving
- Fellowship
- Eating Together
- Breaking Bread (Holy Communion)
- Gladness and Generosity
- Prayer
- Worship
- Sharing Resources
- Making More Disciples

There are a number of different books available. There is a general introduction to the whole initiative. There is one main book for each Habit, containing worship material, material for Bible study groups and other types of study groups, and suggestions of books that can be read and films that can be watched. It also suggests appropriate articles and online media,

music, poetry and pieces of art. This main book also has stories of how each habit has been formed and lived out by churches today, and makes suggestions and urges us to reflect on how each Habit can be formed and lived out in our own lives and the life of each of our congregations. In addition, there is a Bible study book and story book for each Habit. The stories can be used in sermons, Bible studies and other study groups.

Now, one might question the wisdom of embarking on such a course during Project 32. Is this not a case of navel gazing, concentrating on internal matters, when Project 32 should be about outreach and growing our church numerically? In response, I would ask, what is it we are commemorating during the decade that we are calling, 'Project 32?' We are commemorating the renewal of the Moravian Church at Herrnhut, in 1722, and the beginning of the Moravian Church's missionary work in 1732.

The history of the Moravian Church during that decade aligns well with many of the Holy Habits. In 1722, persecuted members of the Moravian Church made the journey to the estate of Count Zinzendorf, near Dresden, in the east of Germany, where they built a community, which they called, Herrnhut (Fellowship and Sharing of Resources). After a time of disunity, the community came together for a service of Holy Communion at the parish church of Berthelsdorf, on 13th August 1727. At that Holy Communion Service, divisions and wounds were healed and unity was restored. It was out of that experience that the Moravian Lovefeast was born (Breaking/Bread Holy Communion, Fellowship, Prayer and Eating Together). It was during this decade that the Watchwords or Daily Texts came into being (Biblical Teaching) and also the Hourly Intercession (Prayer). Finally, at the end of the decade, in 1732, Moravian Church missionary work began (Making More Disciples).

Sometimes, in order to grow, you need to go back to your roots.

Br Philip Cooper

Minister at Fairfield Moravian Church



FAIRFIELD MORAVIAN CHURCH, SETTLEMENT & MUSEUM, DROYLSDEN
Sunday 12 September 2021 1pm to 5pm
 Location for Great British Railway Journeys, Peaky Blinders & the film Mrs Lowry & Son
 Tours every half hour 1pm-4pm (booking preferred see HOD website for details)
 Stalls and Refreshments
Free Admission
 (All parking in Fairfield High School off Fairfield Avenue M43 6ED)

www.heritageopendays.org.uk

#HODs @heritageopendays

HERITAGE OPEN WEEKEND 2021
MORAVIAN CHURCH LOWER WYKE
 Est. 1755
 LOWER WYKE LANE, WYKE, BRADFORD.

SATURDAY 11th SEPT. FROM 10AM TO 4PM
 SUNDAY 12th SEPT. FROM NOON TO 4PM

BUILDINGS OF HISTORIC INTEREST
 PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH AND THE LOWER WYKE CONGREGATION
 PRESENT DAY CHURCH ACTIVITIES AND MEMORABILIA
 CHURCH REGISTERS AVAILABLE FOR STUDY
 REFRESHMENTS

EUROPEAN HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2021 N. Ireland

Cliftonville Moravian Church

will be open from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
 on
Sunday 12th September

*Theme:
 Inclusion - exploring our hidden history together.*

This year we will be joined by Turlough and Claire, who now own and have offered to open the house next door that was the manse from 1937-1996.



heritage open days FULNECK

'FUNKY FOOD FACTS'
SATURDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2021
10.30 AM TO 4 PM

FREE ENTRY

CHILDRENS' ACTIVITY REFRESHMENTS

MUSEUM

EXHIBITION DRAMA

GUIDED TOURS

www.fulneck.org.uk postcode LS28 8NT

Brockweir

*'Come then, brethren, let us sing,
From the dawn till evening!'*

Summer finally arrived in Brockweir with a heatwave in July with temperatures in the low 30s but this did not stop our intrepid tap dancers or table tennis players. They were just glad to be back, tripping the light fantastic and rallying with deadly intent in the Sunday School. The latest rule changes from Church House mean that tea is also allowed to be consumed once the rivalry has ended. The restriction of this convivial beverage caused more discussion in Church Committee than any of the other rules and regulations! So, raise your cups and saucers to Sr Jean Green for all her efforts to keep the group together during the pandemic.

Our table tennis group has been running for many years and it provides us with helpers for soup lunch and brings villagers and friends to the church who probably wouldn't otherwise cross the threshold. They are a friendly group so if you are passing on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon bring a bat and join the fun. We've not had too many injuries!



© Br Philip Ashton



© Brockweir Moravian Church

A few weeks ago, two passing walkers asked permission to fly their drone over the church grounds. It's not a request we've had before but we were curious to see the results and the pictures were fascinating. Property inspections may well be easier in future if you know someone with a drone.

One thing the congregation is also looking forward to, is being able to sing in church, even if we are still wearing masks. Whilst we have to sing quietly, singing together harmoniously or not, it will be a slight step towards normality.

On a personal note, Philip and I would like to thank the ministers and congregation members of Brockweir for their fellowship and support over the years. Quite simply, we will miss you.

Sr Judith Ashton

Fulneck

The first weekend in July was a busy one in Fulneck. Saturday saw the unveiling of a Community Heritage Board situated outside Fulneck Museum - an educational and information source for visitors to Fulneck. The project started in earnest when the Museum celebrated its 50th anniversary in July 2019. The end result has made the wait well worthwhile. Attractively presented and designed, the board gives a short history of the settlement and of the Moravian Church. The words are complemented by archive pictures of Fulneck over the years.

Congregation member David Keighley led the Community Heritage Board steering group and was on hand to deliver a few words at the unveiling ceremony. 'Our project was to source, design and install a Heritage Board for visitors, many of whom walk through and come across Fulneck but are unaware of their historic surroundings. Fulneck is still a living community - one that goes back to the eighteenth century. Much of it is unchanged, making Fulneck a hidden gem. The Board provides an opportunity for visitors to discover more about its rich heritage.'

David gave thanks to his colleagues on the Information Board steering group: '... for all their time, ideas, hard work and tenacity to see our project succeed despite it hitting several bumps in the road. I'd also like to add special thanks to former 'Fulneckian', Michael Harrison. His extremely generous donation to mark the Museum's 50th anniversary went a long way to this project getting the support it needed to become a reality. His mother, Eunice, was a founder member of the museum.' Sadly, Michael was hospitalised when the unveiling ceremony took place; he was represented by his cousin, Jean Hopkins and her husband Tony.

There was also a very special mention and commendation for Leon Sharp a young graphic designer who volunteered his creative services free of charge. Additional financial and practical support came from Leeds City Council.

Prayers were offered by Bishop John McOwat. The official



© Br David Robbins

unveiling was completed by local Councillor, Trish Smith.

On the Sunday, it was Reverend Michael Newman's final service at Fulneck before he, Claire, Daniel and Ethan move to London where Michael has accepted a call to become Minister of the Hornsey Congregation. In addition to his pastoral duties, Michael will become a part-time member of the Provincial Board. With his move in mind,

Michael used Mark Chapter 6 as the basis for his valedictory sermon. He explained that real challenges in life come when God is calling us. We must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and have the confidence of God's support in all that we do. With his help and guidance things will work out for everyone.

After nearly a decade at Fulneck, Michael and family will be much missed. During his time, along with excellent spiritual leadership and many fine sermons, the Congregation were introduced to Christmas tree festivals, Health Walks and a Bible Book Club. Following the service, Br Trevor Kernohan presented Michael with a cheque for £628 collected by the Congregation. In addition, Sr Christine Robbins handed them a more visual reminder of their time in West Yorkshire - a specially commissioned plate painted by Fulneck's recently arrived potter, Emily Wilby. With the formal side of things complete, a picnic and social then followed on the South Terrace.

Mervyn Frisby (18/07/1940-11/05/2021)

Fulneck lost Mervyn Frisby, a longstanding congregation member, during May. Mervyn, originally from Hull, had connections with Fulneck dating back to the 1960s when he lived in the settlement following a work move from Hull. He married his wife, Lynne, at Fulneck and was a leading member of Fulneck Dramatic Society where he both acted, directed and, for many years, was the Society's treasurer. An accountant by profession, Mervyn was a Chapel Servant and auditor for the Congregation. He also served as a Governor for Fulneck School where both his daughters were educated. His funeral took place on 8th June in Church.

Mervyn is survived by Lynne and his daughters, Caroline and Pamela.



© Erika Stahl

Fetter Lane

Ancient and Modern

Recently the historic burial ground at Fetter Lane became a landing pad for an air ambulance that was needed to deal with a nearby emergency. The burial ground must have been an obvious choice amidst the buildings of densely populated Chelsea, and it was a privilege to be able to serve the community in this way.

This year, we will take part again in Open House, when sites of interest across London will be open to the public. This year the weekend is 4th and 5th September from 1pm to 5pm. Thanks to Sr Naomi Hancock, visitors will receive a comprehensive

factsheet including the history of the site from Sir Thomas More onwards. We will also highlight the ecological importance of the Close as a contributor to London's biodiversity and we're about to take delivery of a Bug Hotel as we work to create a nature-friendly environment.

As a congregation we are doing our best to be a good steward of our history, serve the population as required today and support the environment for our children and grandchildren - an important juggling act.

Sr Cynthia Dize

Notices

A REMINDER ABOUT

The Moravian Pilgrimage Committee

A Journey to Who We Are!

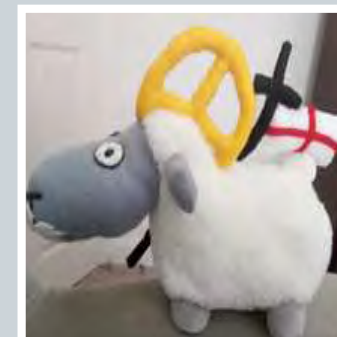
11th-14th September 2021



We have ten hardy pilgrims signed up for our adventure around our province, visiting every congregation and meeting our brothers and sisters in each exotic location.

We are still hoping to raise funds for Moravian Mission and Youth Work projects and therefore your financial support would therefore be most welcome. Your prayers for a blessed journey and a safe return would also be much appreciated.

Reports about our progress will be regularly posted electronically or on t'internet, so you are encouraged to follow us on our way. We will also be publishing pictures of Ludwig the Lamb in all the places that we visit, so keep an eye out for him.



Thank you in advance for your support and if you want to learn more about the pilgrimage, then please contact us at

patsy.holdsworth@moravian.org.uk
or **phill.battelle@outlook.com**

Alternatively take a look at our sign-up page:

<https://tinyurl.com/moravianpilgrim>

From Church House

Provincial Diary for September

- 2 BMB Meeting (Online)
- 8-10 Unity Executive Committee - Basel, Switzerland
- 8 Faith and Order and Ecumenical Relations Committee - Fairfield
- 16 Finance Committee (Online)
- 21 PYCC (Online)
- 22-23 PEC (Online)
- 29 LAMM AGM (Online)

Congregational Register

Deaths

11th May 2021	Mervyn Frisby	Fulneck
7th July 2021	Michael William Lee	Fairfield
17th July 2021	Freddie Alfred Moss	Fairfield
8th August 2021	Peter Walker	Lower Wyke

Dates to remember!

10-19	Heritage Open Days (www.heritageopendays.org.uk/)
12	Education Sunday (www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234838/Home/Resources/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday.aspx)
	Disability Awareness Day (www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk)
21	UN International Day of Peace (www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/)
21-27	Sukkot (Festival of Tabernacles) - Jewish
22	Autumn Equinox

Gracehill Moravian Settlement



The dictionary describes the word 'history' as a continuous, systematic narrative of past events relating to people, country and period. History gives us that sense of time, place and who we are. Before the 1760s, the area which we now refer to as Gracehill was simply a small townland, known then as Ballykennedy, or on the older maps as 'Baile Ui Chennada' from the Irish.

Now a young man from Reading enters the story. His name was John Cennick. As a young man he became very involved with the revival, which was getting inspiration from, not only the Wesleys and Whitefield, but the Moravian Church. So, the young John Cennick became a leading evangelist and was invited to preach in Dublin. Reports are that 'The people of the city heard him with rapture'.

At this time a grocer named Joseph Deane from Ballymena, was on business in Dublin and, on hearing Cennick preach, immediately invited him to preach there. So, on August 6th Cennick set out on a three-day horse ride to preach in Ballymena. The following day, Captain Adair, whose father owned all the land in Ballymena, struck Cennick in a drunken rage and called him a traitor, so Cennick returned to Dublin and then back to England. Cennick came back to Ireland and Ballymena in 1748 and he preached all over the North East. By 1750 he set up a small chapel in the townland known as Gloonan not far from where Gracehill is today.

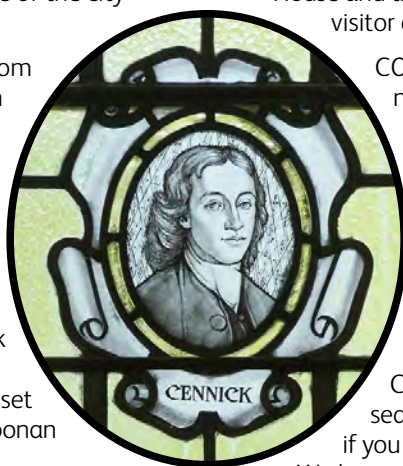
It was not until 1759 that land was leased at the then Ballykennedy, roughly a mile from Gloonan, to create a Settlement based on the Herrnhut model. This became known as Gracehill, and during a six-year period, a church, manse, single sisters and single brethren houses, a day boarding school, a farm, a shop, a burial ground and a few houses were all built. Today, Cennick's name can be found in a church window, a plaque outside the church, on the church hall and on one of the streets. The village of Gracehill, the first conservation area in Northern Ireland, is one of the most visited areas around these parts and several of the church members are now 'Official Tour Guides'.

The village is a beautiful place to walk around and credit for that must go to the Gracehill Old School Trust as well as to the Church. There are beautiful Georgian buildings set around a square and the historic settlement footprint can be clearly seen.

The Square was restored in 2014 and is very popular with

families and older people. Brothers and Sisters Walk goes up on either side of the Church leading to our well-kept Burial Ground, also known as 'God's Acre'. In 2020 a further walk was developed from Brothers and Sister's walk, going along the side of the Burial Ground and linking back to Church Road via Widows Walk. This walk is also very popular.

We have a strong link with Gracehill Primary School which was established when the Church gave over the school to the state. The Church has the right to appoint Governors and the minister takes regular assemblies there. The school also use the church at Christmas for their Carol Service, along with the walks and the square, on a daily basis. In what was the Single Sister's House and then the old Primary School, there is a wonderful visitor centre full of interesting artefacts.



COVID has stopped many of our activities but normally the church is busy, and the hall is always in use, not only for all the usual church activities, but also for groups such as Farmers Market, Ballet classes, Parents and Tots Group and visitors looking for information about their family history! Our Archivist Sr Roberta Thompson and her team are kept busy in that department!

Sunday Worship is the core of what we do, with Communion once a month and the special seasonal services and the Christingle service when, if you don't come early, you don't get into the church. We have a faithful young organist who makes our completely overhauled organ sound wonderful! There is a regular Bible Study and Thursday morning Prayers in the church. Other activities include Men's Fellowship, Moravian Women's Association, Boys and Girls Brigades, Children's Church, Youth Fellowship, Bowling Club, and an annual Summer Holiday Bible Club. There are usually lots of social events throughout the year. Three of the biggest annual events, which of course we couldn't host during these times, are Heritage Open Day, Church Auction and the Village Fair all of which attract big crowds!

Gracehill Moravian Church is an enormous part of the local community in terms of worship, membership, youth and children's provision and social facilities. We hope it is a place where everyone is valued and welcomed without prejudice; to return to our Irish History, during the United Irishmen's Rebellion in 1798, Gracehill was seen as 'a place of refuge for all'.

Sr Roberta Gray

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