



Fuel poverty in the UK

No longer a concern
but now a crisis

In 2019, I published an article in the Moravian Messenger, highlighting the serious issue of fuel poverty particularly in Northern Ireland. At that time there was some good news in that fuel poverty had fallen considerably over the previous 10 years and was predicted to fall further with the long-term goal of the UK government of almost eradicating fuel poverty by 2040. However, this has now been completely turned around with the current energy crisis and its enormous impact on inflation and the cost of living. Fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty is now much worse than at any point over the past 30 years and is predicted to get even more acute.

This winter the levels of fuel poverty will be much, much worse than (at least double) the highs of 2008 and 2009, when fuel poverty in Northern Ireland was at a high point of 44 %, and is now a huge UK-wide issue. In 2019, this was important but not widely discussed in the media and by government as well over 80 % of the UK population were not in fuel poverty. This has now changed completely with the probability of over 80 % being in fuel poverty by the end of this year. It is now suddenly receiving huge media coverage, with the CEO of one energy company stating publicly that we have now reached over 60 % fuel poverty in the UK and with the new Prime Minister putting it top of her priorities and saying that she will act in September.

Fuel poverty, like all forms of poverty, is an intense problem affecting lower income families and the elderly right across the UK but it has been particularly severe in Northern Ireland. A household is defined as in fuel poverty if the family spends more than 10 % of its income on energy bills and in extreme fuel poverty if more than 20 %. Fuel poverty is a complex issue associated not only with low income but also with cooler climates, fuel prices and with a high dependency on certain fuels for heating. Clearly, low income is the most important factor and deprived areas, such as inner-city areas, are particularly susceptible: this is strongly supported by the published data.

One issue in analysing the data is that the latest UK government statistics for fuel poverty was published in 2020 ('Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2020' from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, BEIS). These figures are now completely out-of-date and no longer relevant, so we need to consider more up-to-date information. A recent report from the University of York 'Estimates of Fuel Poverty in January' has predicted 'more than three quarters of UK households in fuel poverty by the new year'. These figures are even more stark in the north of England (80 % in Yorkshire) and in Northern Ireland, 81 %.

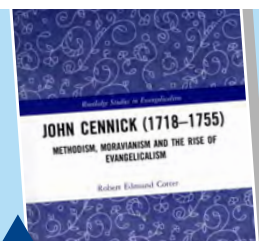
continued on page 111



**Statement from the
Provincial Board of
the British Province**
(page 110)



**The Salem
Congregation**
The Passing of a dearly
loved friend (page 112)



**Book Review:
John Cennick
(1718-1755)**
(page 114)



**Irish District
Summer Activities**
(page 117)

Statement from the Provincial Board of the British Province following the Death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his presence continually.

1 Chronicles 16: 11

On behalf of the Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland, the Provincial Board and the Bishops offer our sincere condolences on the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

We give thanks for her enduring and faithful leadership as our Sovereign; Her Majesty was a constant source of permanence, comfort and stability for the nation. Furthermore, we celebrate a life well lived publicly in service to her Lord, Jesus Christ.

We will continue to hold her family in prayer, that they may find strength and peace in the days ahead.

Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me, and in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.



Editorial

The old hymn 'Through all the changing scenes of life ...' sums up our feelings well. The death of Her Majesty, the late Queen Elizabeth II shocked many of us to the core. Despite her obvious increasing frailty, we never expected her to die. In fact, her ability to say goodbye to one Prime Minister and give a welcome to another, the 15th of her reign, so fulfilling her constitutional duty on the Tuesday seemed to rubber stamp her invincibility. We have been blessed to have her as an example of self giving service to us as she herself served the King of Kings, and we shall not see her like again.

The days following her death have been incredible; the journey through Scotland eventually coming to Edinburgh; her 'Lying at Rest' in St Giles Cathedral, the flight to London and then the incredible spectacle of the move from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Palace, her Lying In State there, from there to Westminster Abbey for her funeral and then the last journey to Windsor for her committal. The dignity and solemnity of it all, precision of the Armed Forces and the respect of the crowds who came from far and near to share in the grief have just added to the mood of the nation.

Added to that is the fact that a new King only comes about through the death of the old Queen. So sad and bitter sweet, the Queen is dead, long live the King! What should perhaps be a joyous moment is instead overshadowed with sorrow. The grief of the Royal Family and King Charles III has had to be played out on such a public stage. A changing scene of life for them all and for us indeed. I do not know how King Charles found the strength to carry out the Vigil of the

Princes, to walk in the processions behind his mother's coffin and then to travel the length and breadth of the United Kingdom to hear tributes about his mother and sit through services in Edinburgh, Belfast and Llandaff before her funeral at Westminster Abbey. And this done in the full glare of cameras.

So, changing scenes, with trouble and muted joy. Changes in our national life and the changes for all of us over the years with the cycle of birth, learning, aging, dying and all the bits in between. The full verse reads 'Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy, the praises of my God shall still, my heart and tongue employ.' This is an old hymn by Tate and Brady published in 1698. But its history goes back much further than that because the hymn is a paraphrase of Psalm 34, a song of praise for deliverance from trouble. It urges the reader to praise God in the midst of all difficulties and afflictions that he or she will face because despite the changes around us God is constant and his mercies never fail.

I pray that King Charles will find it possible to sing God's praises in his own changing life and that he will find in God the help and strength that his late mother did. And I hope that wherever you are and what ever you are facing, you too will find in God a sure deliverer where you can take refuge and that you will be able to sing His praises in all circumstances of your life.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Rev Dr Bob Cotter, Sarah Groves, Professor Crawford Gribben

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New Cennick book launch

The latest book on John Cennick was launched at Gracehill on Wednesday 17th August at Cennick Hall in Gracehill. Rev Dr Bob Cotter, a local Church of Ireland rector, German scholar and historian published the culmination of his research in an academic book looking at the Moravian formation and theology of John Cennick.

Bob and his wife Sally have become good friends of Gracehill over recent years, joining us for worship, leading worship and coming on our two Cennick adventures. These were 'In Cennick's Footsteps' a weekend in the West Country looking at Cennick's Churches there and a weekend in Ballymena celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Cennick's birth in 1718. He and Sally also spent much time in the Church House library, in the Unity Archives in Herrnhut and in the Provincial Archives in Bethlehem PA.

The Book Launch began with a talk about the religious and political background of England and Ireland in Cennick's lifetime by Professor Crawford Gribben, who is a historian at Queen's University specialising in early modern religion. Following this Bob talked about the research he had undertaken and in particular the places that he had visited for his book.

Following a question-and-answer session everyone enjoyed refreshments and a chance to chat informally.

Sr Sarah Groves
Minister of Gracehill Moravian Church

Fuel poverty in the UK continued from front page

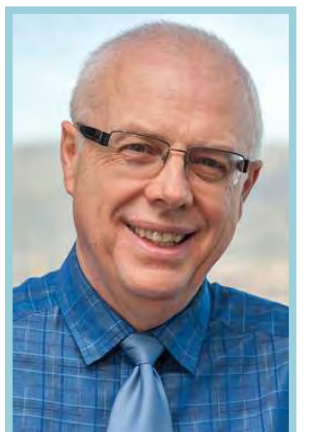
In our last review in 2019, it was estimated that energy usage in Northern Ireland (NI) was 10% to 20% more than in England with 20% higher cost giving an average annual fuel bill of around £1,500 as opposed to £1,200 in the UK mainland. This gap has now lessened due to the high increase in the price of gas (four times more than in 2019) compared to oil, which is the main source of heating in NI. However, the big problem with oil remains that it must be bought in bulk making it difficult for low income families to budget, for example, at present 500 litres costs over £500, almost exactly double that of this time last year. So the cost in NI is now close to the UK average of about £3,000 which is really high and double that of one year ago. This means that anywhere in the UK a family requires an income of over £30,000 per annum to escape fuel poverty, requiring a gross income (before taxation) of over £38,000. As only about 27% of income is over £38,000 (HMRC statistics 2021) then over 70% of families are currently in fuel poverty. This is due to get considerably worse over the winter and could hit 87% early next year when a gross income of around £53,000 will be required to avoid fuel poverty.

Of even more concern is the current number of households in extreme fuel poverty with more than 20% of their income being spent on energy. Using the current average energy costs, a household income of £15,000 (over £16,000 gross) is required so around 15% are in extreme fuel poverty. This could rise to over 40% by early next year, when even families on income close to the average UK could be in extreme fuel poverty. This means that all low income families on minimum wage, on income support, on benefits or on state pension are already in extreme fuel poverty. In the 2019 article, it was pointed out

that the big driver in reducing fuel poverty was the increases in minimum wage but this is no longer sufficient and, as pointed out by many today, much more is required. Many of the solutions, such as less reliance on fossil fuels, is longer term so a new government strategy of short, medium and long term measures is required urgently rather than just long term fixes.

In conclusion, fuel poverty right across the UK is at crisis point and no longer merely a concern with levels possibly reaching over 80% this winter and the stark possibility of over 40% in extreme fuel poverty. The situation is now so acute that fuel poverty is becoming the norm rather than the exception and with the statistics almost inverted: over 80% in fuel poverty rather than over 80% not in fuel poverty. As stated at the end of the previous article, this is a serious on-going situation, but it is now at crisis point. It is a blight on the whole of the UK, which is the 5th wealthiest nation in the world and 2nd wealthiest in Europe. It is now so critical that perhaps only prayer can help to resolve the crisis with the hope that our Lord will guide governments through these difficult times.

Br Roy Douglas
Emeritus Professor in the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Queen's University Belfast. His research interests are sustainable energies and clean energies. His current position is Chief Technical Officer (CTO) of Catagen Ltd, a Net Zero Technology Company based in Belfast.



The Salem Congregation

The Passing of a dearly loved friend



© Sr Roberta Hoey

I am sure that many of our readers will, in recent times, have attended a funeral service marking the passing of an elderly relative, friend or acquaintance, that was understandably, shrouded by a real sense of sadness and loss of one whom you have known and loved for a considerable length of time. But often, and perhaps more appropriately, such a service will take on the form of a celebration - a celebration of a life lived long and lived well.

When, on Sunday 21st September, I attended the service marking the closure of the Salem Moravian Church, I found myself shrouded with similar emotions. Here was the passing of an old friend who had played such an important role in my life and who I had become. And, yes, a friend who had lived long and lived well ...

Established in 1824, had the congregation remained in being for a further two years it would have celebrated its bicentenary.

By referring to the closure of the 'church', in the paragraph above, rather than the closure of the 'Congregation', the word was chosen deliberately and with care, since, yes, the 'church' - in the sense of its buildings and structure will be no more, but the 'Congregation' - its current membership remains and now has the opportunity of an 'afterlife'. This was the theme of the service as devised and conducted to mark the occasion - not one of demise, but rather that of 'moving on', since the intention is that the Salem 'Congregation' will now merge with the Royton Congregation. Royton, as many will be aware, came into being from the closure and 'moving on' of Oldham's other former congregation at Westwood

(which, some 20 years earlier, had closed its doors under almost identical circumstances to those that have now led to Salem's demise).

The front page of the Order of Service depicts the original church building, in which my wife and I were both confirmed and, in 1960, were married (the second last wedding in the old church - that of Br/Sr John Wilkinson, in September of that year, being the last). Immediately thereafter, the old church and its terrace were demolished and the site was sold to the local council in order to provide the means for the building of a new sanctuary to be annexed to the rear of the existing and relatively new adjacent Sunday School building. This was completed and opened on 1st March, two years later.

Later still, the old church site was bought back from the local council to provide much-needed car parking facilities.

It was here then, in this relatively new sanctuary, that the Service of Celebration for the work of Salem Congregation was held. The order of service had been compiled by Br Peter M Gubi - the one remaining serving Minister in the Lancashire District. It was also he who led the worship, assisted ably by fellow ministers who had formerly served the Salem/Royton unit. Br Gubi himself called us to worship with suitably chosen words and apt congregational responses, leading into the Opening Hymn, after

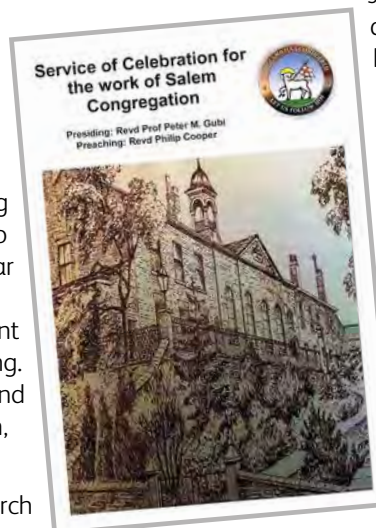
which Br John McOwat was invited to bring a greeting. He did so and reminded the congregation that he had served the old Salem/Westwood Unit in the early 1960s. Br McOwat also pointed out that much earlier he had met Beth, his wife-to-be, at a time when she was a daughter of the manse, her father having been Salem's Minister in the early 1950s. He also brought a greeting from Sr Hilary Smith, a neighbour at Fulneck, who had served at Salem in the 1970s, alongside her husband, the late Br Mike Smith.

Next, Sr Roberta Hoey, as the current Chair of PEC, was asked to bring a greeting on their behalf.

Prayers of Thanksgiving, Confession and for blessings and guidance for the 'times ahead' were offered to the 'Sovereign God', led by Br Martin Smith - recently retired as the Salem/Royton Unit's last Minister.

The Hymn, 'The Church's One foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord' was sung, followed by the Scripture Readings. Br John Wilkinson - a 'son' of Salem, who as a resident in the Lancashire District during and before his retirement had been a regular occupant of Salem's pulpit, he read the 1st Lesson (Genesis 12:1-9) and the 2nd (Acts 7:44-59) was read by Br Rod Evans, another former Minister of the Unit.

These two Readings provided Br Philip Cooper with inspiration for the address that followed on the theme of 'moving on'. As one who, until recently had ministered to Lancashire Congregations



for the best part of 20 years, first at Salem/Westwood (then Salem/Royton) and more recently at Fairfield, Br Cooper had probably served the District longer than any other. It was during his ministry at Westwood that the congregation closed and he had oversight of the 'moving on' to Royton in consequence of that closure. He has just recently 'moved on' into the Yorkshire District, so perhaps we can say that he was well qualified to speak on the subject.

Interspersed with further hymns. Br Gubi himself led the closing Prayers and pronounced the Blessing bringing the worship part of the proceedings to a conclusion.

There had been over 100 in attendance at the service, the majority of whom stayed for refreshments served in the church hall afterwards. This, for many, was much appreciated, since it provided opportunity to meet and greet those whom they had known from earlier days at Salem and had not seen for many a year. For my part, it was heartening to hear from so many of what Salem had meant to them over past years. I was particularly uplifted to hear from those who had been young people in the Sunday School and in the Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade when I first knew them. It is some 40 years since we left Salem on my entry into the ministry, so that those who had been 10-year-olds at that time, were now in their 50s and those who had been in their late teens were approaching their 60s. But it was so heartening to hear from them, and from their parents also, of what Salem had meant to them and their families as they grew into adulthood. Here was a reminder of how, in the 1960s and 1970s, there was so little social and out-of-school activity to occupy the minds and to fill in the times for young people - save what churches and youth organisations had to offer. But now I know, more than ever before, that it changed lives and changed them for the good ... and was so very much appreciated by those whose lives had been changed.

*Servant of God, well done!
Rest from thy loved employ
The battle fought,
the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.*

Br Len Broadbent
University Road, Belfast



The Principles of Project 32

In this month's article I would like to highlight the principles which tie together Project 32. These principles are designed to anchor the activities of Project 32 in areas which will support our ultimate goal of ensuring that the Moravian Church in the UK will be sustainable and grow into the future.

The principles of Project 32 are:

Magnify - We Celebrate God's presence in worship.

Mission - We communicate God's Word through evangelism.

Membership - We incorporate God's people into our Moravian fellowship.

Maturity - We educate God's people through discipleship.

Ministry - We demonstrate God's love through service to our Church and our community.

1) The first principle is Magnify - We Celebrate God's presence in worship. This principle ensures that we consider our worship in the context of reinforcing our goal of creating a sustainable and growing church. This may mean new forms of worship, different times for worship, and the utilisation of new technologies - all with the purpose to strengthen our connection with our God and equip us for God's work in our communities.

2) The second principle is Mission - We communicate God's Word through evangelism, which means pro-actively sharing our Moravian faith with those who are not a part of our church family ... yet! This will involve pro-actively reaching out to others in our community and showing them why our faith is so important to us and that our God is there for them too. Growing our church means inviting people into our churches, whether friends, family or just someone we have met, and making them feel welcome and that they have a place in the Moravian Church.

3) The third principle is Membership - We incorporate God's people into our Moravian fellowship. Once people have become part of our church community, we should encourage them to deepen their commitment to the life of the church by encouraging them to become members. Membership offers many benefits but also responsibilities and confers on Members the right to hold office in our congregations, committees,

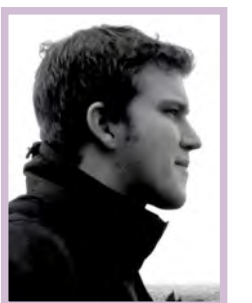
and province where decisions are made about all manner of aspects of our church.

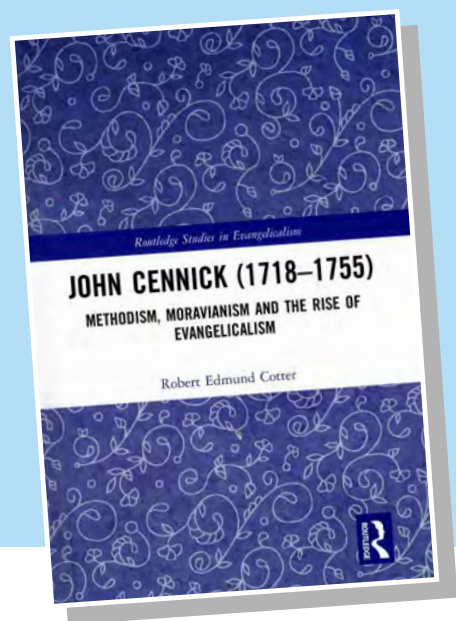
4) The fourth principle is Maturity - We educate God's people through discipleship, and through learning the ways of God we become more Christ like. This will manifest itself through how we live our lives, especially in our Congregations, where we will be more understanding of one another, welcoming of new-comers, and by living our faith out in the community.

5) The final principle is Ministry - We demonstrate God's love through service to our Church and our community. This last principle brings us full circle, in that it is the culmination of the other principles. This does not mean we should all aim to be ordained ministers, as lay and other forms of ministry should be encouraged and developed, however we all do have a role to play in living our faith out in our communities - showing them the nature of God through friendship, outreach, and love. This is something which we can all do.

Br Stephen Maxwell

*Chair of the Project
32 Implementation
Board. In his day
job, he is an
emergency
planning officer for
the NHS in London,
and a member of
the Fetter Lane
Congregation.*





Book Review:

Robert Edmund Cotter, John Cennick (1718-1755): Methodism, Moravianism and the Rise of Evangelicalism.

Abingdon, Routledge, 2022. £120.

For long overshadowed by the dominant figures of the Methodist Wesley brothers and Calvinist George Whitefield, John Cennick has at last begun to receive well deserved fresh attention from historians of the eighteenth-century evangelical revivals. Gary Best's popular biography - John Cennick: The Forgotten Evangelist (2016) - was reviewed in an earlier edition of the Moravian Messenger, and that telling of Cennick's life story did much to rescue him from neglect and even rehabilitate him as the 'apostle of Northern Ireland'! Bob Cotter's new study is a very different kind of book, having started life as a doctoral thesis at Queen's University in Belfast. The revised thesis has been published in one of the leading academic monograph series' on early evangelicalism - the Routledge Studies in Evangelicalism - a fact which explains its eye-watering price tag!

Cotter's study is a theological biography, a study that seeks to understand what made Cennick tick, rather than one that just describes the main features of his life. Its subtitle gives an indication of the complexity of Cennick's spirituality, as he ran the full gamut of evangelical options in the middle of the eighteenth century. Cennick can as a result be difficult to categorise. Most readers of this review will be most interested in his Moravian phase, but this was his merely his final theological destination, and was only arrived at after a period leading the Calvinist revival in London, first as George Whitefield's deputy, and then as his replacement once Whitefield had quit London for one of his many extended stays in America. Cennick's Moravianism must be seen within the context of his longer spiritual pilgrimage. And this is something that Cotter's work certainly attempts to do. The first three chapters are broadly chronological, as we see Cennick in three countries: as a Calvinistic Methodist lay preacher in England to 1745, as a new Moravian convert in Germany in 1745 and 1746. Analysis of this German visit, his immersion in Moravian worship and spirituality and his conversations with Count Zinzendorf, draw extensively upon a diary Cennick kept during this period, a diary transcribed and published by Cotter elsewhere. Then thirdly we have a discussion of Cennick as a Moravian evangelist in Ireland until his early untimely death.

These chapters are followed by three thematic chapters which explore Cennick's main theological emphases. Cotter argues that Cennick's preoccupation with bridal mysticism and blood

and wounds piety, what he calls a Christocentric heart religion, were rooted in surprising sources: Baroque Lutheranism and Jesuit 'Sacred Heart' devotions. It was for this reason, he argues, that Cennick had a 'much greater affinity with the Moravians than with any other of his contemporaries and mentors' (p. 99). Cennick also developed a distinctive eschatology, one again deeply rooted in his Christocentrism and focussed less on Hell and judgement than it was on the culmination of the believer's union with Christ at death. The last of the three theological chapters makes a case for Cennick as an ecumenist, a very modern looking Cennick. At first glance this might appear to be at variance with Cennick's reputation as a divisive character, separating first from Wesley, then Whitefield before finding a home among the Moravians. Yet, Cotter argues, it was Cennick's eclecticism that bred within him a broad-minded spirituality. Perhaps this is another hint at the close inter-relationship between some of the preoccupations of the Enlightenment and those of the early evangelical movement?

In Cotter's hands John Cennick emerges as a distinctive figure in the maelstrom of the eighteenth-century revivals: a 'mystical maverick' who drew from a diverse range of spiritual sources, ancient and more contemporary, to create a spirituality all of his own. That he was not able to develop many of his ideas or articulate them fully was a consequence of his early death, rather than unwillingness or lack of theological aptitude. This is a rich volume, therefore, and one that will repay careful reading by scholars and interested readers alike. It can only be hoped that it will appear in paperback in the not too distant future so that it can find its way into many more hands, as it so richly deserves to do.

David Ceri Jones
Aberystwyth University



'What I Believe'

Moravian Messenger Editor Sr Sarah Groves
interviews Br John McOwat

Br McOwat is a retired Moravian minister who lives in Leeds and is a member at Fulneck Moravian Church. He served congregations in Jamaica and the British Province and served on the Provincial Board of the British Province. John was elected a Bishop of the Unity at the Synod in 2002.

Tell me about your family, early years and education.

I am the eldest of three boys. My father was a family doctor and my mother a trained teacher. I was christened at home by a Methodist minister, and aged four, before the war began, was taken the four miles to Fulneck school. I became a boarder when I was ten and never went to any other school. Later I taught in the Fulneck Schools and became Chair of Governors.

How and when did you come to faith?

As a child I was encouraged to attend the local Methodist Sunday School and at Fulneck I led a group of boys in what must have been a kind of holy club, and occasionally kept a service for the boarders. I really enjoyed the Fulneck services in Church (and started going in school holidays too) being confirmed by Br Ted Wilson. We had the benefit of several lovely dedicated ministers including John Foy and Pat Craig who later became my father in law

How did you meet your wife?

The Boys' and Girls' Schools at Fulneck were separate entities and pupils were not supposed to meet, but the prefects were privileged to attend dances together, as long as they limited it to two dances with the same partner. Beth Craig and I danced and began to write notes to each other, and we met in the holidays. She went to join her parents in Jamaica and we wrote letters for three years.

What lead you into the ministry, how did you hear God's call?

God called repeatedly - I kept saying no, not me. He called me in the words of the hymns and sermons we heard in Church, and through the kindness and friendship I experienced in the Fulneck congregation. I remember the late Br Harold Jones saying after I had led a school service, 'You ought to become a minister'. I was called up for two years in the Royal Air Force and during this time I gave in and said to God, 'if you want me, I will serve, dependent on your strength and help'. I went to our theology college at Fairfield and had lectures at Manchester University and other colleges.

What has been your greatest joy in ministry?

It was a pleasure and a privilege to serve congregations in Jamaica for ten years and to be Provincial Youth Secretary there. Back in England the work as Youth Secretary was enjoyable along with the congregation work at Kingswood, Wheler Street, Westwood, Fulneck, and Harold Road in London.

The ten years of service on PEC was a challenging joy, and membership of the Unity Board gave the privilege of travel to places like India, Tanzania and Alaska. Then the shock of being elected a Bishop twenty years ago, after being retired for two years, brought the joy of Ordinations and Consecrations in many countries as well as a ministry of prayer.

Are you afraid to die, or can you look beyond death?

I am not afraid to die and whatever lies ahead I know that the Jesus I have tried to serve all my life will still be with me.

What can we learn from other Churches and other faiths?

I have long believed that people of faith need to work together and can learn from each other. We should learn more about worship practice and could find our faith enriched. There is such a wealth of good nature but it needs a better understanding of how to express beliefs to non-believers. We see it best when Churches and faiths show loving deeds of kindness in service.

Why are so many people turning their backs on organised religion?

It is not surprising that many are rejecting organised religion for sadly there are still many church people who hold on to disproved, antiquated teaching saying it is in the Word of God. Fundamentalist beliefs must be put aside and Christian people will be the thinking Brothers and Sisters who seek out the real, living Jesus and live by what he actually taught.

Some personal preferences-favourite film, book, music and why?

My choice would be for classical music, with Dvorak's New World Symphony top of the

list. I do enjoy piano playing, but hearing my efforts may not be on anyone else's list! Books by Bishop John Shelby Spong and Dave Tomlinson are great reading. I am a member of LifeLines and also of the Progressive Christianity Network. I have loved singing but that is now a thing of the past.

The place where you feel closest to God?

I feel close to God when gardening which I love and being in wild places in the countryside. I enjoy reading the daily texts in French, German and English and spending time in reflection and prayer, and sharing in the Lord's Supper.

What inscription on your gravestone or epitaph, if any?

Name with dates of birth and death.

Finally, any major regrets and any major joys in your life?

There is never sufficient time to do all that one would like but I am thankful that I have been supported and helped by my wife, Beth, and all my lovely family and friends. I thank God that I can say that I have had a wonderful life as a Minister in the Moravian Church.

The Moravian Church in Nain

Continuation of Br Hopcroft's memories of his call to Labrador in 1971



© Br Robert Hopcroft

The only church in Nain was the Moravian Church, established in 1771, and as recounted in an earlier article there were wonderful celebrations for the Bicentenary.

There were two services each Sunday. The morning service was in Inuktitut and the evening service in English. Wendy and I attended the latter. We were struck by how much influence the early missionaries still affected church life.

The minister was Br Seigfried Hettasch who had followed in his father Paul's footsteps by becoming the Minister at Nain. Siegfried's sister Kate had taught in the school almost all her adult life.

There was a brass band which played on high days and holy days and a stringed orchestra who played in Church. Most of the music that was used were very old German Chorales and the tempo was, to say the least, slow - but the harmonies were wonderful.



Of course, I managed to upset the chapel servants at our first Communion service!

As a newly wedded husband I went and sat with my wife, who pointed out that it appeared that the sisters and brothers were sitting separately. I told her they probably wouldn't notice and if they did they probably wouldn't mind. How wrong can one be? Just before the service began I felt a very strong hand on my shoulder lifting me from my seat and transferring me to the other side of the church without a word being spoken. I was, quite literally, put in my place!

We were delighted to see that they held Christingle services at Christmas and if oranges weren't available then apples or small turnips were used instead. On one occasion, oranges were air-lifted from Goose Bay by the USAF and dropped by parachute onto the bay ice. On New Year's Eve a Watchnight Service was held at 11.30pm to see the new year in and the church was packed. I noticed as we went into church that many of the men had brought their rifles with them, which they stood against the church wall before entering. At the end of the service everyone gathered on the church steps and a salvo of shots

was fired to welcome the New Year with a bang!

On Easter Sunday a sunrise service was held - and yes, it was at sunrise, not a more convenient 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning! Even before that, the brass band had been walking around the town playing 'Hallelujahs' at full volume from about 3am onwards. The good news 'The Lord is Risen' was well proclaimed! After the service in Church everyone made their way, in the dark and freezing cold, up to the burial ground for the traditional liturgy and hymns as the sun rose over the mountains. It was a truly emotional experience.

At the time we were there, if someone died during the winter when the snow was thick and the ground was frozen solid, following the service in church the coffin of the deceased was carried to a cold house at the burial ground to be interred in the spring when a grave could be excavated.



Church services were very traditional, and Wendy and I became accustomed to singing in Inuktitut and English as time went by. At Communion and on other special occasions all the sisters wore their bonnets, hand crocheted in white wool, with the coloured ribbons denoting their status: single, married or widowed.

Following all the Passion Week readings and numerous Easter Services, there was then time for fun. A Unique custom was the 'Easter Monday Races' when the whole town turned out for a day of excitement. This took place on the ice of Nain Bay where hotly contested snowmobile, snowshoe and running races took place. It certainly brought out the competitive nature of both men and women, young and old!

Of course, all the teachers were pressed into taking part in an effort to show the school pupils just how bad we were at running in snowshoes! It was a wonderfully relaxed day on the ice and with so much excitement we hardly noticed the cold. After a long hard winter maybe Spring was on its way? Or maybe not just yet ...

Br Robert Hopcroft

Irish District Summer Activities

Summer is a great time to get together in the Irish District for fellowship and worship.



© Sr Sarah Groves

The annual Irish District Moravian History and Heritage Society outing was in mid-August and was to Gracefield. Gracefield in Co Londonderry was a Moravian settlement with a church, manse, sisters house, square and school. In its early days Gracefield was based around growing and weaving linen and people had come from Ballinderry and Kilkeel to live and work there. However, as the linen industry declined and the countryside was depopulated by people moving to Belfast so the fortunes of this little settlement declined.

Eventually the Church was sold to the Church of Ireland who run it as a chapel of ease for local folk as part of the Woodschapel Parish.

John Costley, whose family came from Gracefield gave a fascinating talk in church about the history of Gracefield and then took us on a walk down to the

Burial Ground. If you looked carefully you could still see marks of a settlement with the ornate gates into the field opposite the Church that is still called the square, and the matching gates into the God's Acre. In the Burial Ground there was a brush for everyone who wanted to clear some of the overgrown grave tablets. After some energetic activity we came together for a prayer thanking God for the life and witness of those who had gone before us in Gracefield.

The afternoon was brought to a delightful close by refreshments provided for us by some of the parishioners and we had the chance to look at the newly restored Church.

District BBQ Before COVID we would have had our usual four Sunday Evening Worship and Fellowship Meetings in Portrush. But this summer we opted for a Summer Barbeque at Carnfunnock

Country Park.

Over 70 friends and members from the Irish District congregations gathered around the covered barbeque area down by the children's area with mini railway and mini golf. John and Olga Cooper aided by Mark and Mandy Kernohan got busy with the cooking. 70 sausages and 70 burgers take some cooking! Whilst they were slaving over the BBQ the rest of us opted for the attractions or just for some chat.

Once all had been fed and watered (tea and coffee available for all) Livingstone Thompson led us in a short act of worship.

It was a lovely leisurely afternoon and we are indebted to John Cooper for organising it all. I hope that next summer we have Portrush Fellowship and a BBQ!

Sr Sarah Groves
Gracehill

CONGREGATION NEWS

Family Focussed Communion at Fetter Lane, London

Several large sheets of plain white paper laid out on the floor became a Communion table for our latest Family Focused Communion. Those children who knew the routine couldn't wait to get down on the floor among the colourful felt tips, crayons and stickers to depict in whatever way they chose, the people they wanted to bring to God in prayer. This was the happy task that our Minister Claire Maxwell gave them, and they were eager to oblige. As they drew, she recounted to all of us the story from John about a boy who brought five barley loaves and two fish and how Jesus managed to feed 5,000 - anything is possible through prayer. Holy Communion is embedded in the service with children sharing some refreshments alongside the adults.

Although aimed at children, our Family Communions provide insight and a different way of looking at things for us older ones as well. We all enjoy singing together (with or without



© Sr Claire Maxwell

hand gestures) and I particularly like the prayer bag which is a kind of lucky dip for old and young. Pull out an object, maybe a giraffe mask or a toy stethoscope, and let it spark in you a prayer. The children are good at this and always honest. Yes, it's a bit noisier, less traditional, but you can definitely learn new and important things from the perceptions of children.

Sr Cynthia Dize

Hornsey, London

Hornsey Summer Fete 2022



© Hornsey Media Team

Welcome Service for Sr Jane Carter at Tytherton, Wiltshire

On the first Sunday afternoon in August members of all six congregations in the Western District gathered at Tytherton Moravian Church to take part in a welcome service for Sr Jane Carter. We were also joined by a few members online as we Zoomed the service into the ether, once a reliable internet connection had been secured. Sr Patsy Holdsworth led the service, which was fitting as she had served the Tytherton congregation for the previous seven years.

Choir performed a few of their sacred numbers for the congregations, including 'I'll go, in the strength of the Lord', a song that Jane was very familiar with during her time performing with the Moravian Yorkshire Singers. Br Paul Holdsworth introduced the service with his old pal Paddington and Sr Patsy handed over a shoe box to Sr Jane, containing essential items such as tea bags, a packet of bourbons, a soup ladle, quiz book, sticky tape and gardening gloves, all of which will be very useful for her as she serves Swindon and Tytherton Congregations.



© Sr Jane Carter

The service was followed by a very civilized afternoon tea out on the lawn in front of the church, in the glorious sunshine. Sr Jane and her faithful cat Bernie had arrived a week or so before the service and are settling into the flat next to the church at Tytherton. We hope that they both feel very welcome in our district and we look forward to working and worshipping with Sr Jane in the future.

Sr Jackie Pennington,
Chair of Western District Conference

Anniversary Celebrations at University Road Belfast

Church Anniversary is always a special occasion, but this year, as we gave thanks for 135 years of worship and witness on our present University Road site, it was just a little bit extra special.

In addition to celebrating the birthday of our church, and a congregation which has been in existence for 151 years, we also gave thanks for Br Derick Wood's 50 years of service to the University Road congregation and indeed to the wider District and Province. Br Derick 'qualified' as a Lay Preacher in 1972 and has led worship on a regular basis ever since.

A number of tributes were paid and the occasion was marked by



© Sr Carol Ackah

presentations on behalf of the University Road congregation and the Irish District. Br Derick was also delighted that three of his fellow 'trainees' from the Lay Preacher class of '72, Sr Carol Ackah, Br Charles Costley and Br Nigel Scarlett were present to join in the celebrations, as can be seen from the 'then' and 'now' photographs.

We wish Br Derick Woods good health to serve for many more years to come.

Sr Carol Ackah



© Br Mark Kernohan

Notices

MWA Gathering 2022

Remember that on 15th October 2022 we are having a long awaited MWA gathering. This is at Fairfield and registration is 10:00-10:30am. Sr Chistine Emanuel will be our speaker at the morning service and Sr Jane Carter will be leading our Communion Service in the afternoon. Circles have been sent forms to complete for workshops and I am looking forward to meeting my sisters in person after such a long time.

Sr Gillian Taylor

Message of Sympathy

Br and Sr McOwat have received this message of sympathy from Br Elijah Gergan and wish to share it with Moravian Messenger readers:

"Our dear Bishop McOwat and Sister Beth,

Our deep heartfelt condolences are with you and the whole family at the loss of great lady Queen Elizabeth II. She lived her life and will be remembered her exemplary contribution for good.

We are so grateful for what Great Britain has done for our family and Moravians in Ladakh.

With our prayers and regards,

Meena & Elijah"

Worship Leaders needed

If you are interested in honing or developing your skills and ability to conduct worship in your own congregation, or that of others in the province, then please sign up for the next intake of the Worship Leaders' Course.

The course will be run online (on Zoom) on the following dates:

11th November 2022, 6pm-8pm & 12th November 2022, 9am-5pm (with breaks)

9th December 2022, 6pm-8pm & 10th December 2022, 9am-5pm (with breaks)

11th February 2023, 6pm-8pm & 12th February 2023, 9am-5pm (with breaks)

10th March 2023, 6pm-8pm & 11th March 2023, 9am-5pm (with breaks)

14th April 2023, 6pm-8pm & 15th March 2023, 9am-5pm (with breaks)

... and culminate in an in-person residential weekend to be held from 12th-14th May 2023.

The course will be taught by a team of experienced Moravian worship leaders, consisting of: Sr Sarah Groves, Br Peter Gubi, Br Paul Holdsworth, Br Michael Newman, Sr Lorraine Shorten, Br Livingstone Thompson and Br James Woolford.

If you are interested in taking part as a participant, please contact Br Peter Gubi (peter.gubi@moravian.org.uk) by 7th October 2022 to register your interest. You will be required to pay a £50 deposit which you will get back if you complete the course in full. Your congregation may be able to support you if you ask.

Summer Camp 2023

...will be held at
The Chellington Centre, Bedford
(<https://www.chellington.org/>)
31st July - 4th August

- more details to follow.

The PYCC will be organising this and details of the age range and cost will be sent out after the first PYCC meeting in September.



From Church House

Provincial Diary for October

1	Yorkshire District Conference	Gomersal
3	Finance & Property Committee	Church House
8	Mission & Society Committee	Church House
10	British Mission Board	Online
18-19	PEC	Church House

Congregational Register

Baptism

27th March 2022 Emily Rose Irene Tyler Lower Wyke

Confirmation

3rd July 2022 Nathan Butterworth Lower Wyke

Deaths

23 May 2022 Malcolm Healey Fulneck

24th July 2022 William Wright Gracehill

20th August 2022 Shirley McGuken Gracehill

3-7 Good Money Week, previously National Ethical Investment Week (<http://goodmoneyweek.com>)

8 Prophet's Birthday - Muslim

9 Homeless Sunday (www.housingjustice.org.uk)

9-15 Prisons Week (www.prisonsworld.org)

9-16 Sukkot - Jewish

16-23 Week of Prayer for World Peace (<https://weekofprayerforworldpeace.co.uk>)

18 Anti-Slavery Day (www.antislaveryday.com)

17-24 One World Week (www.oneworldweek.org)

24 United Nations Day (www.un.org/en/events/unday)

Diwali-Deepavali - Sikh/Hindu

30 Summertime ends

31 Halloween

Dates to remember!

Brockweir Moravian Church

© Sr Judith Ashton



Sitting inside the cool of the white walled church at Brockweir with the sunlight dappling through the beautiful Art Nouveau stained-glass windows, listening to the sound of bird song overpowering any distant traffic noise, you would be forgiven for thinking that Brockweir has always been a picturesque oasis of tranquillity.

However, that is not the case. 190 years ago Brockweir was a busy port where larger craft unloaded their wares onto smaller vessels to be taken further up-river, and where building ships, of all sizes from river barges to seagoing vessels, was the main industry.

There was no bridge across the river nor was there a place of worship but, there were at least seven public houses, several 'houses of ill-repute' and a cockpit. Given the choice between walking two miles up a very steep hill to the Parish Church, paying two pence for the ferry across the river to the church in Tintern or frequenting the local hostelrys, it is not surprising that Sundays were days of unhallowed revelling with cock fighting, gambling and drunkenness.

A local doctor concerned about the moral and physical welfare of the village and having heard of the missionary work of the Moravians, contacted the Moravians in Bristol. In May 1833 Brockweir Church (built on the site of the Cockpit!) was opened as a 'Home Mission' of the church. Its first minister was Br Lewis West, a former schoolteacher at Fulneck and he served the church for 38 years. In 1892 a Hall designed by young architect Henry La Trobe was built to house the busy Sunday School. La Trobe became well known later in his career and Brockweir Sunday School is one of the least changed of his designs.

The church thrived for many years until the coming of the railways ended the river trade, and poverty hit many families as men left the area to find other work. The building of the bridge in 1906, ending the last river trade, the ferry across the Wye. Church attendance declined and in 1955 discussions started with a view to closing the church. When electricity came to the village in 1957 it wasn't installed in the church buildings as the Church would not be continuing.

However, in 1961 Rev J D Monger of the Baptist Church in Monmouth was approached to see if he would oversee the Brockweir Congregation. He accepted immediately and his initial two-year trial period turned into 30 years full time ministry! His association continued until his death in 2013. During Br Monger's time the church was revitalised, and he and his wife ran a Conference Centre and Retreat House in the Manse.

Two of our former ministers, Sr Beth Torkington and Sr Sarah Groves (herself a 'Brockweir girl') have gone on to become Bishops of the Unity, in fact Sr Beth was the first female bishop in the British Province!

Our current minister Sr Patsy Holdsworth, met her husband Paul at one of the many Youth Weekends held at Brockweir over the years. Despite only living a few miles from each other in Yorkshire, they attended different churches so hadn't met previously.

Brockweir has a long ecumenical background and strong links with other local churches. We welcome believers of all denominations to take part in the life and work of the church and regularly welcome preachers from other churches in the area. We take part in local WDP services and hold regular joint services with the Parish Church.

Our regular service is at 6.00pm on Sundays; during lockdown these were on Zoom and we have continued with hybrid services. We hold monthly 'Lunches for Charity' which provide outreach and raise money for a number of charities. Various local groups from Table Tennis to Tap Dancing regularly use our Sunday Schools. We have held Book, Prayer, and Bible Study groups at various times, some of them on Zoom. Our church and Sunday school are also often used by other churches for Quiet Days and Retreats. At Christmas we hold a Nativity Walk, complete with real donkey, around the village.

Our congregation today once again faces the real possibility of closure. We are very few in number and are not able to carry out the considerable outreach that could be possible in our village. Churches in rural communities face very different challenges to those in urban environments. A plan by the PEC to convert the Manse into a Retreat Centre offered a ray of hope, but the initial plans were rejected by the District Council. We hope an appeal will be successful, and the dream of our Manse once again becoming a Retreat Centre will become a reality. Our door is always open and visitors book shows that many people appreciate the peacefulness of our church and the squash made available to visitors.

Brockweir has a history of resilience; we may sometimes have been bowed down but by the grace of God we have never yet been broken. It is still our prayer that we be given the strength and wherewithal to continue to serve God and provide a spiritual focus for our community in the 21st Century and beyond.

Sr Sue Groves

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