

moravian messenger

November 2022



Duncan Wood, who grew up in the former Westwood congregation in Oldham and is now an Anglican churchwarden in Norfolk, reflects on war and remembrance.

Remembrance



Mandy and I had a holiday in France in September. On the way down to the Beaujolais vineyards, we stopped to visit the grave of my great-great-uncle John William Frost at the Cabaret Rouge military cemetery, at Souchez, near Arras. It was the second time we'd been there. A few years earlier, I'd bought some red roses in Germany and taken them to his grave.

Why red roses? Well, it's a Lancastrian thing, of course. Perhaps it's a spiritual love of kin one never knew in earthly life. More generally, it's about human sympathy. In his Resurrection Symphony, the composer Gustav Mahler has an alto solo to a rose in a hauntingly beautiful passage about human suffering:

*O red rose,
Mankind lies in direst need,
Mankind lies in greatest pain.
I would rather be in heaven.
I came upon a broad path,
But an angel came and tried to turn me back.
Ah no! I refused to be turned away.
I am from God and to God I will return,
Dear God will give me a light,
Will light my way to eternal blessed life.*

John Frost lived on Prospect Road, near to Westwood church, and was a machine minder at a local cotton mill. He was 35, and was married with six children, when he volunteered for the Army. He joined the 1st Battalion of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps, but he died on 23rd June 1916 in one of the random minor events of trench warfare.

His sister Sarah, my mum's grandma, continued to attend church.

Another relative who died in the Great War was Percy Clegg, my grandad Wood's cousin. He was only eighteen. He lived with his mum and dad, who ran a grocery store. An apprentice pattern maker at Platt Brothers engineering works, he was also a part-time soldier in the Oldham Territorial battalion, the 10th Manchester. Not long after war broke out, Percy was shipped off with the rest of the East Lancashire Division to the Dardanelles. The Division boarded troop trains at Bury in the pouring rain, its band playing military marches; but the ground was so muddy that the bass drummer, Private Seddon, slipped and put his head through his own bass drum. Was that an omen for the ill-fated campaign?

continued overleaf on page 122



Associated Country Women of the World European Conference
(page 124)



Visit to Herrnhut for the Celebration of its 300th Anniversary
(page 126 - 127)



Unity News: Ordination of Sr Dena Fortuzi
(page 128)



A pilgrimage to Herrnhut and the Czech Republic
(page 129)



Remembrance continued

Percy died on 12th July 1915 at Gallipoli. How did he die? His body was never found, and we do not know. I have read the war diaries, and I suspect he was a casualty of the Turkish response to an attack by a neighbouring battalion, the 5th Highland Light

Infantry. Perhaps he was providing some covering fire, but his battalion was not on the move.

Percy is commemorated at St Luke's church in Chadderton, which temporarily gave a home to the Westwood Moravians on their exodus to Royton some years back.

Why do we remember the war dead individually? It's quite a modern thing. After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the British dead were unceremoniously dumped in a mass grave. Contrast that with the care taken to find and commemorate named individuals after 1918, and again after the Second World War. Think of the care with which the Unknown Soldier was chosen, and the

pomp and ceremony of his transfer to Westminster Abbey. This sense of equality owes a lot, I think, to public education since 1870 and a realisation that victory in modern war depends on a skilled workforce back home; a workforce that increasingly had the vote. It was the Great War that finally made it impossible to deny women the vote, though it took a few more years to get full equality.

The Christian Church is founded on remembrance. We have the gospels, which are literary works based on memories of Jesus. But it is holy communion, the fellowship meal at the heart of church life, that refreshes the living presence of Christ. We ask the Holy Spirit to make Christ present with us - and in us - through the bread and wine, which symbolise his body and blood. We remember his suffering and sacrifice, but also his glorious resurrection, ascension and eternal lordship. The prayer is noble and poetic and ancient and universal, and it invokes the living presence not only of the Lord but of the whole church triumphant, who are working with us and through us to help secure the fullness of God's rule.

This should shape our Christian remembrance of the war dead. There will always be horror and grief at what they had to endure, and sometimes at what

they did, and at their sacrifice; but now they are with the Lord and fighting with him - the Prince of Peace - for the kingdom of God.

On the way back from the Beaujolais vineyards, Mandy and I visited the Canadian War Memorial at Vimy Ridge. It was close to our gîte. It is an impressive memorial of sacrifice and suffering, but it does not in my view glorify war. It marks the place where all four divisions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force fought together for the first time, in 1917, and it is often thought of as the place where the Canadian nation as a single body was born in adversity. Overall, it is an orderly and classical edifice, but it holds within itself powerful statues of suffering people: a lone woman grieving; one man expiring; another man stretching painfully to hold up a banner. The two sharp-topped towers of the memorial pierce the sky as if to prick the conscience of Heaven itself. The names of the many dead are carved into the lower walls. And just as the structure contains emblems of suffering within itself, so it is surrounded by them - the shell craters of the preserved battlefield.

Br Duncan Wood



Editorial

Bah Humbug

This will be my Christmas rant over and done before the festive, and not always Holy, season starts.

A friend has just shown me some advertisements for Christmas Day lunches at local restaurants, the most outrageous was £295 for an adult meal at one of Belfast's best hotels, but some of our local hotels were around £210 for lunch on Christmas Day. I am sure the prices are much higher in other places. We sat and laughed in the easy knowledge that neither of us would be booking such an extravaganza for Christmas.

The context of Christmas this year has changed; there is a war in Ukraine and as a result fuel prices have gone through the roof; inflation is rising and we are heading for a recession; post COVID seems to be bringing mental health problems to each of our homes and communities.

No one needs more stress. But Christmas does just that - the stress of getting the perfect gifts, the perfect meals and the visits, the cards and decorations. So I am writing this before Christmas to suggest to all of us to trim well back on Christmas.

I don't want to give local businesses a hard time so try and buy from the local shops rather than online. But we don't really need more stuff so less can be more and that includes for children. What children need and benefit from most is not more and more toys but more time with their families and doing things together and more interest in their lives and thoughts.

I love Christmas food but none of us can possibly eat all the stuff we get in for Christmas. We just don't need it! And the shops will be closed for a maximum of two days so why do we stock up as if we will be facing a siege? And don't start me on the pressure of the Christmas meal - it is a glorified roast but the stress of getting there is shocking.

So setting aside the religious implications and meanings what is really good about Christmas - well you can make your own list but mine are carols and candles; Christmas lights and decorations and my Christmas tree, seeing family and friends and the day after Christmas, Boxing Day. Don't get me wrong I love Christmas but the materialistic stuff and rush gets in the way and spoils it for me.

If that resonates with you, now in November start to plan your Christmas with less food, less money spent, less waste and less stress i.e. do less, spend less and, if you can, give more to charity!

I would love to hear back from readers in the New Year if they managed to trim back and actually have a more meaningful Christmas.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Safeguarding in the Moravian Church

Many of you will be familiar with safeguarding in the church and will have attended one of the online trainings but you may not be aware that my work focus will be only on safeguarding in the Moravian Church from the 1st October. No longer will I be trying to balance the safeguarding demands with keeping up with developments in youth and children's work, planning camp and the myriad of other things that came my way as Provincial Youth and Children's Officer. I am sad to leave the youth and children's work but increasingly I have

recognised that the safeguarding needs someone who focuses on that and has the time to keep up to date and continue to develop and improve safeguarding in the church. After a week, which seems to have been focused on training, I can see there are many things which I need to work on. One of them will be to do a short piece most months for the Messenger; this might be about a new or changing area of safeguarding, it is often in the news, or about how my work is progressing and changes that are on the way. It may seem odd to many of you

but I'm excited by what lies ahead, it will be a continuing challenge, but it is an ever changing landscape and although I will take time to reflect on where we are, I know it will be an interesting journey. I hope you will all be willing to travel with me as we continue to improve safeguarding in the Moravian Church.

Sr Joy Raynor

Provincial Safeguarding Lead
<http://moravian.org.uk/provincial-life/information/safeguarding>

PYCC Report for Moravian Messenger

The first meeting of the re-constituted PYCC (Provincial Youth and Children's Committee) took place on Saturday 24th of September. Br James Woolford was elected as Chairperson for the committee with Sr Claire Maxwell elected as Secretary. Having travelled from near and relatively far, we wasted no time to get stuck into the task of establishing our priorities in provincial youth work as a committee for the next season. Our three areas of focus are: reflection, re-energising and moving forwards.

Our areas for discussion covered a range of topics such as the Greenbelt Festival, My Forum Drop In for young adults, Summer Camp, The Youth Heritage Tour, Moravian Moves Festival, The International European Youth Leaders' Conference and developing ecumenical relationships in the context of youth work. On a more practical level, the need for a separate Youth Fund was highlighted which would be useful to have as a focus for fundraising and additional projects.

Our priorities and defined objectives for the year ahead as a committee are:

1. *My Forum: an opportunity for 18-25 year-olds to learn more about the church and enjoy a time of fellowship. We are planning to host one in Northern Ireland in early 2023 - more details to follow!*
2. *Summer Camp.*
3. *Taster Days across the Province for Summer Camp.*

4. *Training for the British Province.*

5. *Increasing the visibility of PYCC and ensuring that congregations feel more supported in their work with children and young people.*

As a 'newbie' on the committee, I was impressed with the variety of opportunities for young people that are available across our church, both on a local UK level and on an international level, some of which have been listed above. Young people and children are crucial to the church, both now and in the future and as a committee, our aim is to nurture and encourage the existing work across the province with young people, while actively listening to further discern how they can best be served and can also use their gifts to serve in the Body of Christ. It is a privilege to be a part of this committee, each member brought their own experiences of youth and children's work to the table, both metaphorically and literally. Please pray for us as a committee and for all who volunteer in vital youth work roles. The committee members are: James Woolford, Claire Maxwell, Lol Wood, Alishba Khan, Rachel Hamilton, Kieran Hopton. Also attending our meetings will be David Howarth on behalf of the Provincial Board and Phill Battelle on behalf of the Unity Youth Desk.

Sr Rachel Hamilton

Gracehill

Church Service Sunday

Church Service Sunday occurs each year on the third Sunday in November in the British Province of the Moravian Church. It is a time when all forms of Church Service are celebrated and encouraged. Church Service can be anything from Ordained Ministry and overseas Missionary work to Committee work, thinking about ways that each of us can respond to our vocation and calling, and use our gifts to the glory of God and the Church. In preparation for Church Service

Sunday, the provincial Church Service Committee invites someone, or a district, to put together and prepare resources for worship on that third Sunday in November. This is then disseminated to Ministers and Church Secretaries to pass on to whoever is facilitating worship on that Sunday.

This year, thinking about Church Service will have a greater sense of urgency about it as we are currently short of

Ordained Ministers (with no students in training) and, if we project ahead, within the next ten years, 10 of our current 17 serving Ordained Ministers will be eligible for retirement. Please do pray about this situation, encourage others whom you think will make a good Minister to consider applying, and seek to discern within yourself if God is calling you.

Br Peter Gubi

Church Service Committee

Diversity is our strength, Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) European Conference 19th-22nd September 2022



I want you to cast your mind back to when the race, colour, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation and identities, veteran status, disability or age stopped you from chasing your dreams and fulfilling your life?

There is a quote in the Bible, Revelation 7:9 'I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the lamb.' We praise God each and every day for the vast diversity of creation and for fulfilling the promise to bless all the nations by including them in Christ, but tactlessly we have to sometimes give a helping hand and really push this message forward.

This is a huge part of our ACWW's mission supported by the Women's Institute. In September, after being pushed back for two years, due to the dreaded COVID epidemic and now also the heart-breaking news of the Queen's passing, with her funeral taking place on the 19th September, (our registration day) therefore making travel, either home or aboard difficult. However, Seven Derbyshire delegates finally got on the train at Crewe for the enduring journey to Glasgow for a four-day European

Conference which the Scottish Women's Institutes would be hosting.

Now let me just give you a background to why these conferences are so important. In each Triennium, ACWW's nine global areas organise an Area Conference. The conference is an opportunity for all members in the area to hear updates, bring and share their own work and opinions, raise concerns, ask any questions and reaffirm their commitment to the work of ACWW. Our last European conference was in Romania and since then such a lot has changed in our world. So, time to start afresh and start to focus on what ACWW does best.

What do we do best? We focus on the less fortunate throughout the world, working on behalf of women and families to make the world a more rightful place to live. It is vital we raise funds to carry out this work. The conference welcomes members throughout Europe. This year, members travelled from Romania, Northern Ireland, Norway, England, Iceland, Scotland, Latvia, Switzerland and even people from Canada, South Africa and Australia. Just wow! That is how large this mission is! Due to the terrible war in Ukraine, we were saddened

that we could not welcome our sisters from Russia and Belarus.

So, where do we stand now? We find ourselves at a crossroads, using our combined efforts with great force and resilience. We push forward with a shining light to reach the vulnerable in the world. We strive to amplify the voices of women, to connect and mobilise them to become leaders in their communities and to empower women through friendship and collaboration.

These aims will stand firmly as we move forward with strength, power and trust. We will remain Rural Women in Action who will find egalitarianism in diversity.

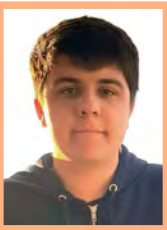
I shall end on a quote by Maya Angelou, 'We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their colour.'

It was a privilege to attend our European Conference and rub shoulders with some truly inspiring women. Here's looking forward to the 30th Triennial World Conference in Malaysia.

Sr Jaqueline Flint
Ockbrook

Hymn-Writing Competition

In order to mark the 275th Anniversary of the first Christingle Service on the 14th December 1747, the Faith and Order & Ecumenical Relations Committee announced the launching of a Hymn Writing Competition for young people up to the age of 25. The hymn could either be new words to an old tune or even new words for a new tune.



Louis Enright, a young person from Lower Wyke Moravian Church, wrote the following hymn for SATB choir and piano called 'What Would Jesus Say?' which was originally written by him for another song writing competition which he also won. The sheet music will be distributed across the Province to be sung during Advent and Christingles this year.

You can see a recording of the hymn made a few years ago (with a slightly different arrangement and set of lyrics) at: <https://youtu.be/OrNp-k-P6bI>.

Many, many years ago, born on Christmas Day
A boy brought joy and happiness to nobody's dismay
This season is the time of year when love is understood
A time of snow and carols and a time for doing good
What would Jesus say if he were here today?
Would he smile at all the children singing carols round the hay?

Would he stay around when there are people living rough
If we all care a little more then that's enough
Thirty-three years later Jesus died, we thought it was the end
The world was mourning him until he came to life again
If he was prepared to die for us then he must think of us well
But would he still think that today if he went back to Earth to dwell

What would Jesus say if he were here today?
Would he smile at all the children singing carols round the hay?
Would he stay around when there are people living rough
If we all care a little more then that's enough

Christmas time is a big celebration
Ev'ryone singing joyous melodies
It's a time of goodwill across the nation
And caring for each other starts with me

What would Jesus say if he were here today?
What would Jesus say if he were here today?
Would he smile at all the children singing carols round the hay?
Would he stay around when there are people living rough
If we all care a little more then that's enough
What would Jesus say?

Sr Patsy Holdsworth
Minister of Brockweir and Kingswood Moravian Congregations

'What I Believe'

Moravian Messenger Editor Sr Sarah Groves interviews Sr Janet Cooper

Sr Janet Cooper is a physiotherapist working in the community and is the immediate past President of the Moravian Women's Association. She is married to Phil and has recently moved from Lancashire to Yorkshire.

Introduction to your background, early years, education, family

I grew up in Droylsden, close to Manchester. I have one younger brother who has cerebral palsy - his legs don't do what he wants them to. My parents encouraged us both to get a good education. I passed my eleven-plus and went to Fairfield High School, which was my first contact with the Moravian Church. My brother had lots of sessions of physiotherapy when he was a child. In a way, he was the inspiration for my career. My physiotherapy training took place at Manchester Royal Infirmary.

How and when did you come to faith?

My home, as a child was opposite a Church of England church. Aged about four I saw children disappearing into the building every Sunday afternoon and I wanted to be with them. My parents weren't churchgoers but had no objection to me going to Sunday School. My faith grew from the teaching and example of my Sunday School teachers. I left the Church of England when I met Phil. Fairfield had a youth fellowship which provided an opportunity for being with other young people who attended church. At my Church of England church, there was only really me in my age group and lovely as the people at church were, I felt quite isolated.

What has been your greatest joy in your Church life?

Meeting so many different people and hearing their stories. I find other people's faith journeys fascinating and inspiring.

Have you ever been angry with God, and if so, why?

Most definitely! As a young physiotherapist I was faced with the serious inherited illnesses and deaths of two young people - one with Cystic Fibrosis and one with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. I wasn't prepared for this at all. I didn't lose my faith, but I decided that if these deaths were the will of God, He wasn't a God I wanted anything to do with. The prologue to John's Gospel helped me a lot. It tells us that there is and will always be darkness in the world but that ultimately the light will win. I still have a rant at Him, when I am faced with human suffering, but I always come back to the opening verses of John's Gospel.

Are you afraid to die, or can you look beyond death? Do you believe in a resurrection, and if so, what will it be like?

I don't know whether it's fear or I'm just not ready to go yet! I do believe in a resurrection - I hope I will be able to meet with family and friends who have gone before me. I also hope I will be able to put a few questions to God and get some answers so I can finally understand why? (See above)



What can we learn from other Churches and other faiths?

Other faiths can challenge us to think about why we believe what we believe. Other churches show us different ways to approach our Christian faith. I have been privileged to worship in churches of different denominations during my life and I have taken something useful and positive from all of them.

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

I think the Church has often presented Christianity as a moral code rather than the way in which we pay attention to our spiritual nature. Of course, our personal behaviour and morals are massively important as a way of outwardly demonstrating our inner faith. However, you can be a good person without organised religion, so I think many people just don't see the point, if the sole point of Christianity is to be good.

I also think churches spend a lot of time 'doing' rather than 'being' ... I don't think most people need more 'doing' in their lives, but they do need to learn how to be.

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

Film: probably Parenthood - a funny, poignant, hopeful film about the possibility of growth and change.

Book: I am a bookaholic so choosing one is impossible! The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe is probably my favourite children's book. I love the novels of Barbara Kingsolver and Anne Tyler. I have a well-thumbed copy of Diary of a Provincial Lady (E.M. Delafield) - it is a hilarious, fictional diary written by a woman in the 1930s and early 1940s. It is surprisingly relevant to today. For reading about faith, any book

by Barbara Brown Taylor.

Music: the music of U2 - their music has been a soundtrack to my life.

The place where you feel closest to God?

A quiet spot somewhere outside - just a corner of a garden will do. However, I have felt the greatest joy in God's presence in the middle of a U2 concert.

What inscription on your gravestone or epitaph, if any?

No gravestone, I want a tree. Just my name on a small plaque.

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

No major regrets - you can't change what has gone and I believe in renewal, redemption and resurrection.

Major joys: my family - watching my three children grow into the caring adults they have become. Achieving an MSc in Dementia Care at 53 and publishing my dissertation as an article in a peer-reviewed journal were also moments of great joy and satisfaction.

Visit to Herrnhut for the Celebration of its 300th Anniversary

In 1965 as a 19-year old first year architectural student my chosen subject for an architectural dissertation was the Moravian Settlements in the United Kingdom so I already had an affinity with the subject which then became a labour of love as I delved deeper. Though it was not in any way a learned work, I learned of the crucial importance of Herrnhut not only as the working model for future settlements internationally, but as the embodiment of the Moravian ethos and purpose. It became a fervent hope that one day I would visit this birthplace of the concept.

About a year ago I realised that the perfect time to visit would be 17th June 2022 for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the start of construction of the settlement, when Christian David felled the first tree.

Thursday 16th June

I stayed at the Guest House in Herrnhut and Br Mihan offered to collect me from Löbau station. However, my journey from Berlin got off to a bad start when my train left without me, having not recognised the announcement in German that the platform had changed at the last minute. I alerted Br Mihan and he managed to get me to the first celebratory event, the Lovefeast, with four minutes to spare. Then I noticed that I had lost a hearing aid on the journey.

I just had time to be introduced to Sr Erdmute Frank and to meet Sisters Mihan (mother and daughter) before entering the church.

Now my experience started in earnest. My first awareness that something special awaited was the loud murmuring of conversations as I walked to the door of the church; then, as I entered, there was visually so much to take in. The space itself was quite stunning; larger than any Moravian Church I have seen, it has been newly refurbished in immaculate detail and all finished with the purity of white - walls, windows, pews, balconies and even the organ, though with the added shine of silver pipes. Bliss for an architect.

And then there was the congregation, filling the space to capacity. There must have been about 500 people present, all obviously happy in their company; diverse, and oozing Moravian friendship as only we can. I found a seat on the back row and was warmly welcomed by my neighbours while, awe-struck, I tried to take it all in.

The service began with Dona Nobis Pacem from the choir and a welcome from Sr Frank including her asking the visitors from the different provinces/countries to stand up and be welcomed. There were large contingents from Holland and Surinam, some from Switzerland and USA. When the UK visitors were invited to make themselves known I was astonished to be a lone figure. I must admit, I had thought that such an auspicious occasion would have seen a more significant representation from our province.

This was quickly followed by the distribution of tea and buns by servers in traditional costume, during the singing of a number of choruses. At this point I reflected that I had not celebrated the Lovefeast for forty or fifty years, and how much I had missed

it. I was also struck by the similarity of the buns to the ones at Gracehill in the sixties, prepared by a local bakery to a specific recipe.

Then, in the usual informal manner, there was news from provinces around The Unity. By now I was beginning to miss my hearing aid and I wasn't catching everything that was said but from memory there was a lot of growth around the world, not so much in Europe, apart from in Holland, and I think the British ten-year evangelical campaign was mentioned. A personal message was delivered by Bishop Augustine Joemath from South Africa. His entertaining message included displaying his bespoke COVID mask with the Lamb and Flag emblem embroidered on the side; he told us how much interest and conversation it had stimulated. The service ended with a solo performer dancing to the Lord's Prayer, followed by the benediction by Bishop Joemath.

After the service I met Br and Sr Vogt who showed me round the impressive church refurbishments in progress, including meeting the architect - a Herrnhut resident and member - who described much of the detail that went to make the interior so impressive. This included the sophisticated lighting system and the 'look, no hands' suspended balcony.

After, I walked around the village to understand the layout and absorb the architecture, and then walked to the guesthouse for supper. By now it was getting dark and I wandered into the gardens where I discovered a campfire with the large Dutch contingent sitting on four long tree trunks singing and chatting, it brought back memories of Summer Schools at Ockbrook long ago.

Friday 17th June (The Big Day)

And so to Friday, the big day. I awoke excited, with a great sense of anticipation. The day started well with a hearty German breakfast and meeting new friends in the guest house.

• Outdoor Music

The day's official activities started at 10:00 with a musical interlude in the church garden, a taster for the celebrations.

• Guided tour

After this, and before the first major event, Sr Erdmute Frank took four of us on a quick guided tour of the settlement core. I had not realised that at the end of the war virtually

the whole settlement, including the church, had been wantonly destroyed by the Russians, and that the rebuilding is still going on. All that I saw had been carefully rebuilt and restored; a colossal achievement, especially given the strictures of the post-war regime.

A highlight of the tour was to be in the room where the daily watchwords are compiled, and to see the silver bowl from which the OT texts for each day are drawn; appropriate accompanying verses are then selected. I had not realised that this exercise was done five years in advance.

Although most of the buildings were of quite a simple design there were occasional decorative flourishes which I gather were derived from Zinzendorf being influenced by his visits to nearby

Dresden which was the centre of the Baroque architecture.

A large proportion of the settlement's core contains facilities for people and children with learning difficulties and I noticed throughout the visit how much the community has taken them to heart.

From a distance I saw the new rear extension to the Moravian Unity Archives and was impressed that the Church had completed an attractive modern building whose simplicity, I think, will contrast and bring emphasis to the nature of the artefacts.

It became apparent to me that modern-day Herrnhut is larger than the Moravian settlement which is at the core of the town. I had not appreciated this before, thinking that it was still self-contained, but the town is certainly defined by its Moravian roots.

• 11:30 Organ recital in the Church

The beautiful organ has recently been refurbished and extended and - though I am no musician and was missing a hearing aid - I can say that the sound filled the space impressively and was very well received.

• 12:00 Prayers and singing

The recital was immediately followed by a service of prayers and singing. Although mostly in German I could sense the nature of what was being said and could join in with the tunes I recognised. It was a numinous atmosphere, at the same time warm and joyful.

• Walk to God's Acre

After lunch, with time on my hands, I took a walk to see the prototype God's Acre. Situated on a hillside just on the edge of the settlement, my first surprise was that it didn't sit neatly within the settlement's grid layout like the burial grounds of Fairfield and Gracehill. Despite this, once inside God's Acre, it does contain the characteristics of a Moravian burial ground, though on a rather grander scale than I am used to. Extensive lines of trees sub-divide the place into rectangular areas of graves. Within this pattern, the headstones were laid out flat in the true Moravian tradition, though I didn't distinguish the separation into areas of men and women. The last observation I had was that the graves of the Zinzendorf family were tombs about a metre high and I did wonder whether, though all Moravians are equal before God, was Zinzendorf more equal? He might have a good claim.

• 17:00 Civic presentations

The congregation hosted a civic ceremony in which the Mayor of Herrnhut invited his three neighbouring counterparts, plus the mayor of Bad Boll, to share in the anniversary celebration. The church was packed, there must have been approaching 600 which created a stimulating atmosphere and emphasised the significance of the anniversary further afield.

There was a very interesting programme of music involving the organ, again, along with a saxophone quartet, before the mayors exchanged gifts of books on behalf of their communities, and Br and Sr Vogt closed the proceedings in German and English.

After the ceremony, outside, there was a quite gargantuan spread of refreshments including a lot of elaborate cakes, the like of which I had never seen before. One wouldn't go hungry in Herrnhut!

• 19:00 Annual service and walk to monument

And so to the climax of the anniversary celebration, 300 years to the day that Christian David felled the first tree to create the first permanent Moravian settlement: the annual service and walk to monument which has been re-enacted 250 times since the 50th anniversary in 1772.

After this, the celebrations moved outside into the church garden where we all gathered for singing and prayers before walking to the monument to Christian David on the site of the tree felling. We formed a long line snaking our way through the

settlement, park and forest before we got there. It was quite a distance (about 1 km?), and hard work for a dodgy hip; I felt for the poor builders all those years ago who had to carry the timber all the way to the settlement. Once there though, we gathered round and Br and Sr Vogt again led us in praise; it was a moving moment for me to be giving thanks and praise at the spot which marked

the birth of the communities that shaped my life.

Then the walk back to more refreshments and music in a marquee, but not for me; weary by now, I decided to walk back to guest-house and contemplate the enormity of my experience.

Saturday 18th June

Br Mihan had kindly offered to take me to the station in Löbau and he invited me to breakfast first. I walked slowly through the settlement one last time, taking in the quiet dignity of the buildings and their setting. It was a sad and premature goodbye as there was so much more organised and to see.

Reflections

I would never have thought that so much action and emotion could have been packed into 36 hours. To say that my visit was memorable would be quite an understatement, but I have tried to identify the main impressions rather than particular events or moments:

- the warm welcome, ready smiles and friendliness, reaffirmed my sense of belonging to the world-wide Moravian family.
- the beautiful interior of the church (numismatic?) reflecting the purity of God's creation and Christ's message.
- the tingling feeling of a full church (rare these days) with the congregation singing its heart out. Nobody sings like us!
- the integration into the community of the people with learning difficulties and wondering whether there might be a message for us.
- finally, the rewarding experience of just being in the prototype Moravian settlement which spawned so many others, some of which had a direct bearing on my upbringing and character.

Br Jon Muncaster



© Br Jon Muncaster



© Br Jon Muncaster

Unity News: Ordination of Sr Dena Fortuzi



Sunday 18th September 2022 marked a historic day for the Moravian Church. Sr Dena Fortuzi was ordained as a deacon and is the first pastor from the Kisha Moraviane, Shqipëri (Moravian Church, Albania).

The work in Albania began to take root nearly 30 years ago and it is a joy to see it go from strength to strength. Supported by many but especially the Danish Mission Board, despite a growing secular society where the main religion is Islam, the Church began to emerge quickly through the leadership of three women, Sr Merita Meko, Sr Viola Grillo (Sr Dena's mother) and Sr Vjollca Mazi. At the 2010 Synod it officially became part of the European Continental Province. Against this backdrop, Sr Dena's formation and journey to ministry began, and she started her studies at Moravian College, Bethlehem completing a Master of Arts in Theological Studies, through distance learning. Dena was the first student to complete her studies in this way and has hopefully opened this opportunity for others.

Brothers and Sisters from Denmark, Germany, Sweden, UK and the USA joined with the congregation in Tirana, Albania to celebrate. The emotion and love as everyone came together was palpable which illustrated the efforts and determination of so many people in different countries who continue to support the ministry in Albania despite challenges that have had to be faced and overcome. Bishop Theo Clemens (ECP) was the presiding Bishop and he was joined by Bishop Sam Gray (USA South), and Br Jørgen Bøytler preached on the vine and the branches (John 15: 1-11). The hospitality of the congregation was in grand Moravian tradition as we were treated to a reception after the ordination. In the evening the new Rev Fortuzi presided over Holy Communion before a night of fellowship with dinner and dancing!

Sr Roberta Hoey
President of the Unity Board

Report from the Autumn Conference of the Yorkshire District

Br Dick Porter reports on the autumn district conference of Yorkshire Moravian churches, held at Gomersal.

EVERY Moravian congregation in Yorkshire will soon have a full-time minister, the region's autumn district conference was told.

The congregations of Horton and Lower Wyke will be told in the coming months who their new minister will be, said Sr Roberta Hoey, chair of the Provincial Board.

The two congregations have been interregnum since Br David Howarth joined the Provincial Board last year and Sr Jane Carter took up the call this summer to serve Swindon and Tytherton.

Fulneck and Baildon congregations are being served Br James Woolford, while Gomersal and Wellhouse now have Br Philip Cooper to lead them.

At the conference, Horton's deputy, Br Richard Parker, praised the church committee 'for finding someone to preach every Sunday for the past 13 months.'

The news comes after Salem Moravian Church, on the east side of Oldham, ceased to be a place of worship over the summer and was amalgamated with Royton Moravian Church.

Sr Hoey said the process leading to the closure had been ongoing for around six months and no decision had yet been taken about the building, which is still used by a nursery.

In his closing service at Salem, Br Cooper said of the congregation: 'God has gone before and will be there to welcome them into their new home'.

Br Kenneth Evans reported that West Yorkshire Churches Together had ceased to exist and described it as a retrograde step.

He said he was told the forum: 'had run its course'; but asked: 'How can that be?' He said there would be one more meeting, to formally close it and to decide what would happen to its finances and minutes.

In a letter to West Yorkshire Churches Together, Br Evans said: 'If the forum is to be no more, we trust the local

ecumenical groups will continue to work effectively together'.

For the Moravian Singers, Sr Diane Thornton put out an appeal for more members, who currently number 15. She said the choir was now working towards Advent Sunday on 27th November at Baildon.

Sr Thornton reported they had been given the chance to buy an extensive collection of sheet music from a former choir, meaning a saving on future library costs.

The conference was told that Summer Camp had not been possible this year due to very low numbers but instead had been turned into a retreat for youth leaders.

Plans are now under way for Summer Camp 2023, which is due to take place from 31st July to 4th August at the Chellingham Centre, a converted church in Bedfordshire.

Conference chairman Br Woolford said the camp would be based in the south one year and in the north the next, to help fill the numbers.

Br Dick Porter

A pilgrimage to Herrnhut and the Czech Republic



On Monday 19th of September after various flight delays eleven pilgrims met at Berlin airport to start their journey. There were members from Ockbrook, Harlesden, Fetter Lane, Royton, and the diaspora. We spent four nights near Herrnhut before continuing into the Czech Republic and Prague and then back to Germany and Dresden, and traced many journeys, singing hymns at many of the places we visited, feeling joyous and blessed to be in Herrnhut for the 300th anniversary year of the founding of that special place.

Herrnhut: the name chosen for the original settlement, means 'under the shelter or watch of the Lord', and is where the original refugees from Moravia (now in the Czech Republic) were offered land to settle by Count Zinzendorf. Here they made their home 300 years ago, free from religious persecution and able to worship together peacefully. The first Herrnhuters also interpreted the name of their settlement to mean that they wanted to live on watch for the Lord: on watch for Jesus and his present task for them.

On the outskirts of Herrnhut we stopped at the spot where the first tree was felled for the construction of the first house in the settlement. The spot is marked with a stone monument inscribed with the words of Christian David as he felled the tree: 'Yea, the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself'. Here our group of pilgrims remembered in a prayer those early settlers and the refuge they found in this sheltered place in watch of the Lord.

On another day our group also climbed the Hutberg: the hill above God's acre in Herrnhut. The name literally means 'shelter hill', so named for the shelter it provided in former days for sheep and goats. At the top of the hill is an observation tower, the Altan, and from there the view took us on a journey into Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany, as Herrnhut is situated in an area where the three countries meet. Looking at the view I was struck by how alike the landscape was all around the tower: rolling hills, forests, villages and little settlements and buildings, and Herrnhut itself, all under one sky with no indication of where the borders of the three countries were. I thought of the wars in these areas over the centuries and of displaced peoples seeking refuge as a result, right up to the present day with refugees coming to Herrnhut from the Ukraine. I was reminded of an old Native American proverb: 'we kill over a plot

of land, that belongs only to our Mother Earth. All you have is what you came with .. and what you will leave with...Your Spirit.' I would maybe add to that, that we leave with our spirit in Christ, and faith in God's shelter. I believe the Moravian Church, in faith, provides shelter to all.

At the end of our first day in Herrnhut we walked back to our hotel along a sculpture trail through scenic woodland. Along the route were various modern sculptures relating to the history of Herrnhut, Count Zinzendorf and on biblical themes, leading us to think about our own questions of faith. One sculpture was of a giant pair of hands shielding a selection of workmen's tools. To me this represented God's shielding of our earthly work, and again referred me back to the name of Herrnhut and the safety it provided to those first Moravians under the shelter or watch of the Lord.

The next day we travelled to Kleinwelka to visit the Moravian settlement. The church is large, built to accommodate the pupils and staff of the schools that used to flourish there. In nearby Bautzen, the 'city of many towers' that is over 1,000 years old, St. Peter's cathedral is a divided church with both Protestant and Catholic areas for worship divided by a waist high metal screen - perhaps a model for future places of worship. Our final stop was Berthelsdorf and Zinzendorf's castle that is situated on one side of a square. It has been renovated along with some of the other buildings and more work is in progress. The castle contains Zinzendorf's writing desk and lovingly restored rooms for concerts and social gatherings. Berthelsdorf's church was an interesting building with not one, but two tiers of galleries to contain an expanding congregation. There had been quarrels amongst the early settlers at Herrnhut. They had walked the mile to Berthelsdorf to celebrate the Lord's supper and after discussions and taking part in the service their differences were resolved. Although the building has electric lights, some of the chandeliers and the organ were prepared for candle lit services.

A bright sunny day found us in Prague - The Tyn church was used by the early brethren - it was ornate but very beautiful. The statue of Jan Hus that is in old town square was circled with flowers and much photographed by tourists. Most would have been unaware of the significance of the journey he started for our church in the fifteenth century. Outside the town hall on the ground are twenty-seven crosses in memory of those

continued on back page

Cliftonville, Belfast

Br Stephens led a service in tribute to our late Queen Elizabeth II, remembering her dedication and faithfulness over 70 years. We recall with gratitude her input in both Northern Ireland and Eire when by her words and the holding out of her hand she encouraged reconciliation on a number of occasions.

Vivienne Davis and Lorraine Gill have been busy purchasing and collecting suitable contents for the Christmas Shoe boxes, nine others willingly answered their request for help in filling and wrapping in Christmas paper to complete the 125



© Br John Cooper

ready for transport. In addition, the faithful friend of the congregation has been busy again this year knitting and crocheting blankets and garments and these will be forwarded to Europe with the boxes. Our thanks to all.

The first Bible Study of the winter session was held on 5th October when the theme was Prayer. The year is slipping by and we are beginning to think about and plan the Christmas season.

Sr Edna Cooper



© Sr Claire Maxwell

Fetter Lane, London - Heritage weekend

The Fetter Lane congregation took part again this year in Open House London, a chance to promote Moravian Close to our neighbours and to the wider public. Because our visitors can absorb much of our history

without entering the buildings (Sir Thomas More's stable block), we could cope with the pandemic restrictions. This year, the event fell during the national period of mourning for the late Queen. Rather than postpone, we decided to build on our link

with the sculptor Mary Gillick whose 1952 effigy of the Queen for coinage and stamps was designed at the Close, where she and her husband lived and worked. A book inviting people to write their thoughts or prayers was set up in the Chapel and local historian Ian Foster was on hand to tell people more about the Gillicks' work at the Close.

Over the past few years of Open House, Naomi Hancock has produced and refined a comprehensive booklet which enables people to get the most from the visit at their own pace. She also led some informal 'walk and talk' sessions giving more detail of the Moravians' use of the site from 1750 onwards. A local group selling second-hand books in aid of the charity Mary's Meal's was on hand adding another attraction for visitors who numbered nearly 200 this year. Our pianist, Anton Pazicky switched to his accordian for the afternoon, playing a mix of popular tunes and hymns.

Open House weekend gives us a chance to talk to people about Moravian heritage as well as our place as a Church in today's Chelsea.

Sr Cynthia Dize

Royton, Oldham

As we move from the season of Summer to Autumn, we reflect on months passed. The last time we sent an article in was May, the end of Spring and the start of summer. During this time, we had a few new members, who housed themselves in the church letter box. A family of blue tits took shelter there and it was lovely to see them grow and develop their feathers. One morning they were gone, but we heard louder and more vibrant bird songs within our church garden. We hope and pray they are safe. Continuing our ornithological theme, in pre-COVID days the sisters of the Moravian Women's Association (MWA) sponsored a tagged cuckoo called Chris, as he crossed the Sahara and returned to his breeding ground in Norfolk, he provided many years of tracking data and a legacy of knowledge. By sponsoring the bird (sadly now perished) the sisters were named on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) website. The MWA also shared in afternoon tea raising £70 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Massive thank you to the MWA for spreading the gospel and the love of God by caring for God's creatures and donating to charity.

On Sunday 18th September the Moravian Church Royton welcomed nine new members into the congregation. One of whom has worshipped with us for a while and eight who have joined us from Salem Moravian Church. It was a lovely service by Br Martin Smith, who recently became a member of Royton. He preached on the bible passage from Philippians 2: 3-4, 'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.' None of us, if asked by God had we carried out these things would be able to



© Sr Hannah Cooper

say 'yes', we have, every time the opportunity has arisen! However, we can try, and will continue to because that is what God asks of us. However, in times where we struggle, God provides us with the Holy Spirit who works within and through us. He also provides us with one another, to help, support and take care of each other. How lucky are we at Royton

Moravian Church to have nine new members who carry and can share the memories from Salem with them but bring new fresh ideas and faith to our congregation. We are blessed! Also, on the Sunday 11th September we agreed a name change to our church, we are still Royton Moravian Church but have added formerly Westwood and Salem, to remember our history. We should all look forward to our future but also remember our past, whilst embracing the present.

As we firmly move into Autumn, with cold, dark nights. We celebrate the crops that have grown over the past few months and share the food it produces with people less fortunate than ourselves. The people who see what is in the picture, as a gift! Happy Harvest and God bless you all.

Sr Hannah Cooper

Fulneck, Yorkshire

Worship during the season of Trinity has continued at Fulneck, led by a mix of visiting preachers and our Minister, James Woolford.

We marked both the Platinum Jubilee and the passing of Queen Elizabeth II; celebrated our Church anniversary and, at a more prosaic level, sourced a new baker for our Lovefeast buns. Our new incumbent is using Br Ron Davey's tried and tested special recipe to good effect.

In July the Church's drama group's production of 'Home & Beauty' collected a silver medal in the 'Best Overall Play' category at the 2022 Wharfedale Festival. It missed out on gold by a quarter of a point to Ilkley Playhouse.

August saw the introduction of a new and massively successful event - the Fulneck Classic Car Show. Over 30 vehicles, polished to perfection, were on show, ranging from a 1934 Morris 8 through to a 1999 Morgan sports car. The event raised over £1,400 which was split between Church, the Museum, and the Drama Group. An estimated 500 people, including the Lord Mayor of Leeds, attended the event, some of whom also looked around church and the museum and enjoyed refreshments in the Boys' Brigade hall. Organisor, Tom



Booth, who lives in Fulneck, is hoping to make it an annual event.

In line with many congregations in the UK, Fulneck opened its doors to the wider population on Heritage Day, 17th September. This year's theme was 'Imagination, Innovation and Invention', celebrating the many talents of Moravian personalities. The excellent displays, created by Sister Myra Dickinson and her team, included information on Victorian feminist, Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, and railway engineer, Terry Miller, both of whom attended Fulneck School.

Finally, with a hint of the forthcoming Advent and Christmas season already in the air, a weekly afternoon craft team, led by Sister Allison Turner, are busy knitting Fulneck Angels, which will be placed around Pudsey during November and December.

Br David Robbins

Notices

Mission Flat

The Mission Flat will be once again available for rent from November, and all income goes to support the work of the British Mission Board. The rate is £50 per night for up to two nights, and £40 per night for stays lasting three days or more. Ministers will be charged a rate of £20 per night up to two nights, and £15 per night for stays lasting three days or more. Please contact Sr Lindsey Newens to make a booking at: lindsey.newens@moravian.org.uk

Congregational Register

Receptions

19th June 2022	Martin Smith	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Helen Rothwell	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Anne Broadbent	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Janine Parkin	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Ann Royal	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Mark Dixon	Royton
18th Sept 2022	John Coutts	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Chris Coutts	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Arthur Marsland	Royton
18th Sept 2022	Anne Reid	Royton

Deaths

6th June 2022	Marian Hall Johnson	Royton
8th Sept 2022	Clifford Lambert	Royton

1	All Saints' Day	Dates to remember!
5	Bonfire / Guy Fawkes Day	
13	Realisation of the Headship of Christ in 1741 Remembrance Sunday	
13-20	Interfaith Week (www.interfaithweek.org)	
14-18	Anti-Bullying Week (www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)	
19	International Men's Day	
20	World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (www.roadpeace.org)	
27	First Sunday of Advent	
30	St Andrew's Day	

From Church House

Provincial Board Update:

Provincial Board have divided their responsibilities as follows:

- Chair - Sr Roberta Hoey
- Company Secretary - Br David Howarth
- Provincial Treasurer - Br Livingstone Thompson
- Finance - Br Livingstone Thompson and Br Edwin Quildan
- Property - Br David Howarth and Br Michael Newman
- Mission - Br Paul Holdsworth, Sr Roberta Hoey, Br Livingstone Thompson and Br Michael Newman
- Ministry - Br Michael Newman and Sr Roberta Hoey
- Fulneck School - Sr Roberta Hoey and Br Paul Holdsworth
- Choir House - Br Edwin Quildan

Congregation Assessments 2023 - With the rise in inflation and increased costs, we anticipate that the per capita contribution in assessments will rise beyond the £420 which was requested in 2022. Further details will be communicated to congregations at the end of December. We ask congregations that have standing orders to make changes as quickly as possible once the new figure has been communicated.

Provincial Diary for November

28 Oct-5 Nov	BMB (R. Hoey & J. Carter)	Tabora, Western Tanzania
5	WDC (Western District Conference)	Swindon
8	FOERC (Faith and Order Committee)	Moravian Church House
14	BMB (British Mission Board)	Online
15-16	Provincial Board	Moravian Church House
17-26	MCF (Moravian Church Foundation) Meeting	South Africa (R. Hoey)

A pilgrimage to Herrnhut and the Czech Republic *continued*

killed in uprising in 1621 in the early years of the thirty years' war following the battle of the white mountain. Our guide then took us to her church. It is a small building where we were made very welcome despite there being a concert later that evening. This church has only been Moravian for a few years as the church in the Czech Republic has been on a difficult journey since the collapse of communism. A split occurred such that evangelical churches arose and, in some cases, locked the original traditional buildings and sold them. This little church we saw has benefited financially from the continental province to restore it and now appeared to be very active. Those members of the traditional churches are confusingly a mission province and those in the evangelical wing are the Czech province, as the former churches need assistance to manage their congregations and estates.

The next day we began in Niesky. There we visited Emmaus that is a hospital looking after older people and a new Hospice that cares for adults but could accommodate children if needed. The chapel in the main hospital is new and has beautiful modern stained-glass windows telling the story of the journey on the road to Emmaus. The church in Niesky is large and has a big gallery. The church has some very big stars to display inside and outside the church. In God's Acre most of the area with the old graves is left for wildflowers and insects, a quarter being cut each year in rotation. We journeyed on to Železný Brod where we were made very welcome. Some of the members accompanied us to the chalice rocks. We first journeyed up small steep roads and then walked through woods and rock formations where people had gone at night to celebrate the Lord's supper secretly in their own language. Each year on 5th July, the eve of the anniversary of Hus being burnt at the stake in Constance in 1415, the congregation travels at night using lanterns to celebrate the Lord's supper there. We sang and prayed there in the open as our forefathers had done.

Our final day began with a short journey to the church in Jablonec in the Czech Republic where we first had a small tour of the town once a hive of industry making glass and jewellery. We then visited a lake that has been created by constructing a

dam to control water flow and avoid floods. Several new families have recently joined the church from other denominations. However, the whole building is in the care of the Czech Mission province. After sharing the watchword, a hymn, and a prayer we left for Liberec. Here the congregation was in the evangelical branch and had a very different feel. The buildings do not look like a church and are situated amid many tower blocks. Worship takes place in a multi-purpose room that has a wall of mirrors to accommodate a dance class. There is a daily café, second hand clothes area, mother and baby room for advice and checks and much emphasis on youth work. This seemed a much more

affluent church with lovely gardens that were producing fruit and vegetables and had well maintained outdoor play equipment including a sandpit. The journey this branch of the church has taken is reaching out to the local community in many ways. We heard that there is another church in Liberec that has a kindergarten and school - you do not have to be Moravian to attend but many are. The pastor and his wife, whom we met, had come home especially to meet us from a youth conference with 200 participants! Our final evening was spent in Dresden seeing some of the restored buildings like the 'Church of our Lady'. Symbolically the stones remained black rather than being cleaned.

We had all been on a very informative journey and seen places

we had dreamed of visiting for many years. We had witnessed how our predecessor had journeyed both literally and, in their faith, and how the church had and still is adapting to the needs of the local community. As one path had ended for a church a new lane emerged to carry on their work.

Our thanks go to Br Joachim Kreusel for putting together and organising such a varied and wonderful programme. Looking back, I am amazed at how many different places we visited, each of them interesting and special in their own way. Thanks go also to all our hosts and guides, and the congregations who welcomed us so warmly. I would also like to thank our volunteer pilgrim drivers and appreciate the challenges they met with in driving us on our many and varied journeys.

Srs Barbara Skiba and Claire Summers



The Moravian Messenger

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

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

Editorial Team, Church House, 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TJ
editorialteam@moravian.org.uk
Contributions for the Messenger should reach the editorial team by the 7th day of the preceding month.

Design & Artwork
David Bull
dave@redragdesign.co.uk

Printing & Distribution
G. R. Walkden
Tel 01253 681338