

moravian messenger

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Remembrance Revisited

I must start this article with a confession. For most of my adult life I had little time for Remembrance Sunday. My experience was that too often it became jingoistic, xenophobic and, sometimes, almost a celebration of war. I was born in 1944, just before VE day, and by the time I was a teenager I was bored with the stories of the war and the coming together of communities between 1939 and 1945. I was a teenager in the 1960s and all I wanted to do was look forward, not back.

Many years later, now a lay preacher, I would avoid taking preaching appointments for that particular Sunday, never sure how to handle it. This changed in 2008. At that time, I was working as Head of Fundraising for a youth homeless charity in Birmingham called St Basils. The charity was named after the redundant Anglican Church where we had our headquarters. It is a grade two listed building and, as such, any changes that we made had to be reversible. One area that was virtually unchanged was the apse. A divider had been put up to separate it from what would have been the main area of the church, then used as the boardroom, but the apse itself was mainly unused. Behind the altar there was a stack of what can only be described as rubbish, gathering dust and unloved.

Among those items was the plaque of remembrance for those of the parish of St Basils who died in the 1914-1918 war. When my colleague, Catherine Clarke, discovered it, it was dirty and unloved, and she was appalled. She had it cleaned and re-mounted on the wall ready for a rededication service on 11th November. This was announced on BBC local radio and, to our amazement, the grandson of one of the fallen remembered on the plaque was listening and decided to attend.

So, I was cornered, I had to lead the service and so I thought it was time that I did some more research. Thirty-seven million died in the so-called Great War. The problem is none of us can imagine so great a number. Therefore, unless we have some of our own family to remember, the danger is that they become just numbers. But on the St Basils plaque there are just 119 names and, as I investigated the records, I was reminded that these were real. They were sons, brothers, fathers. Real men who did not come back. Real men who do lie in the corner of some foreign field.

James Waldron was a Private in the Gloucestershire Regiment. He was twenty-eight when he died on 13th October 1915. He left behind a wife, Alice, who lived at 48 Homes Building, Palmer

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The date line for this editorial is the morning of Saturday 21st October. This is important because as I write this I am waiting, with dread, for what happens next.

A nightmare has unfolded in the near east that has horrified and divided the world. The deadly assault by Hamas fighters on innocent Israeli civilians on the morning of Saturday 7th October was a calculated act of wickedness and sheer brutality. It was intended to hurt, shock and provoke and it did. The slaughter of infants and children and the taking of hostages just added to the pain of the nation of Israel and to many people across the world with relatives and connections to that land.

The world has split in opinion since then with some taking up the cause of the Palestinians calling it a reaction to years of oppression by the Israeli state over Gaza and the illegal occupation of the West Bank. They claim that Israel will only be satisfied when they have created a Greater Israel that does not include any Palestinians. Others say that the Palestinians will never rest until Israel has been removed from the land and that it is the duty of the Israeli state to use any means to ensure the safety of the state and its citizens. These are of course extreme positions, but they are aided by the hardliners on both sides and by the misuse of information via journalists and social media.

Battles over land, who can live there and who is safe are not new and can be seen across the world, the Ukraine/Russia war, which has rapidly slipped from our headlines being the most recent example.

The Bible is one of the oldest books and yet it is also so contemporary. It often seems to tell of a God who tells his people to take a land and to kill all who live there - you only have to read the first chapter of the book of Joshua to find the promise that the land is promised 'will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and

from the great river, the Euphrates - all the Hittite country - to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.' It is a battle for land where the cities and villages of the people already in the land are to be destroyed - men, women, and children. I do not find it edifying reading and we often spiritualise it calling for Christians to be strong and courageous and for us to keep holy.

There have been battles over this land for centuries since then, as it is on the crossroads for all the Mediterranean empires, Assyrians, Babylonians and Romans. The very stones are witnesses to some of the worst of what humans can do to each other. The Bible shows us the reality of human nature and is like a mirror to the darkest parts of our souls. You only have to read the last verses of Psalm 137 to see the desire for revenge that can exist in us.

So, what shall we hope, what shall we pray for; obviously return of the captives, comfort for the grieving, healing for the wounded, justice and peace in this traumatised land, for both Israelis and Palestinians. How peace will come I do not know but what I do know is that peace is a Biblical imperative, Psalm 34 and 1 Peter 3:11 command us to not just to seek peace but to pursue it. As Christians we now read the Bible seeing Jesus as the image and the face of God and he says in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew Ch 5:7,9) 'Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy, blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God'.

So here we should pray for peace and peace makers who often take terrible risks, in our own communities, in Jewish and Muslim communities and for the people of the land where the stones cry out for peace.

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



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Street in Bordesley Green. His widow had no grave to visit, James's body was never found, his name is on the memorial in Loos cemetery in France, alongside another 20,000 with no known grave.

Then there is Joseph Ganderton, a corporal in the East Lancashire Regiment. Twenty-two when he died in November 1916. He is listed as leaving behind his mother, Alice Maria Jones of 73 New Canal Street. He lies in Waggon Road cemetery in the Somme.

William George Clements, Private, Royal Warwickshire Regiment age twenty-four. Son of Mr and Mrs Clements, husband of Elizabeth of 10 Sycamore Avenue, Clifton Road, Moseley. He was buried close to where he fell in the unfortunately named Thistle Dump Cemetery. He shares that cemetery with 137 British soldiers and seven German soldiers.

George Billingsley, also of the Warwick's. Son of Mrs E Billingsley of Allcock Street. Allcock Street is where I parked my car every working day for 16 years. These



were real people, from real homes with real families who suffered real grief. I have many more stories about the men on this plaque but perhaps the saddest was Private TW Attenborrow who died in Italy just four days before the Armistice in 1918.

At the end of any conflict there must be two emotions: joy that the war is over and sadness at the appalling cost of that victory. It is the cost that we remember every November. Remember those lives given, like the men from St Basils, that

the world may change, be better. As I grew up the custom on this Sunday was to focus on the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 wars but, in a new century, and as time marches on, we acknowledge with sadness that there are still many conflicts in the world; there are still millions of victims. As I write this the War in Ukraine rumbles on and a new conflict has just begun in Palestine/Israel. We must remember the victims in all conflicts, pray for them and press for solutions that do not involve more killings.

So, 15 years ago, my attitude changed. I try now not to look at the big numbers but to break them down to the individuals, the personalities, the real people who were involved in these conflicts. Because of that, I can no longer turn away. I, too, will remember them.

Br Blair Kessler
Hall Green



Safeguarding – The Online Safety Bill

This legislation has finally passed, on 19th September, all stages in Parliament and is just waiting for Royal Assent before becoming law. You may have seen much of the discussion about this over the past few years: the social media firms and others with interests in having an unregulated internet argued against the campaigners keen to make the internet safe for everyone. To be fair the social media companies started to implement some aspects of this bill a while ago but there was a strong sector who resisted in the name of freedom. However, after much debate both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and modifications along the way, the protection of children and the enabling of adults to take more control of their online lives will pass into law.

This Bill holds social media platforms responsible for the content they host. They are expected to act quickly to remove illegal content and stop children seeing material that is harmful to them. If they fail to do this they will receive significant fines from Ofcom, with prison sentences in some cases for the bosses, although we need to wait to see if these are implemented.

There is a zero-tolerance approach to protecting children and young people from inappropriate content. Social media platforms will have to:

- Remove illegal content quickly or prevent it from appearing in the first place,

including content about self-harm.

- Prevent children accessing harmful and inappropriate material.
- Enforce age limits and age checking measures.
- Ensure the risks and dangers are more transparent, including publishing risk assessments.
- Provide parents and children with clear, accessible ways to report problems online.

This is not without challenges as you can imagine. How do you verify the age of a child?

The empowerment of adults to take control of what they see online is another aspect of this bill. The protection for internet users will:

- Make sure illegal content is removed promptly.
- Place a legal responsibility on social media platforms to enforce the promises they make to users when they sign up, through terms and conditions.
- Offer users the option to filter out harmful content such as bullying, that they do not want to see online.

This all seems reasonable, and you may have thought this already happens, or you may think it restricts your personal

freedoms but breaking this law will attract up to £18 million or 10% of global revenue in fines.

There are also sections designed to tackle online fraud, and violence against women and girls. Non-consensual sharing of intimate images could attract a prison sentence of up to six months. There are also clauses to prevent animal cruelty.

Overall, the bill should make the internet a safer place with a regulator who has the power to implement it. BUT technology moves quickly and having this bill does not mean we can stop education about online harms or put measures in place to keep our children and young people safe or be cautious about the way we use the internet. I wonder how long it will be before this needs modification because technology has found a way around it, or new harms have become apparent? For the time being let's celebrate this step forward in protecting children and young people and protecting adults too.

Sr Joy Raynor
National Safeguarding
Lead

The Moravian Church in
Great Britain and Ireland



What's on in your area for your families and young people?

Below is a list of events that have been sent to us for the month of November. If you look at it and see that your family/youth event is not advertised please contact Sr Claire Maxwell so she can collate the information for the month of December for you in this space. Her contact details are:

Sr Claire Maxwell
PYCC

Here are the events in November:

Lancashire

Every Thursday - Fairfield Moravian Church runs a Tots Time 10am-2.30pm in the College (under 4s with an adult).

Yorkshire

Every term-time Friday - Lower Wyke Moravian Church hosts Adventurers for those aged 9-13 years of age from 7pm-8.45pm. All are welcome.

Sunday 12th November - Lower Wyke's Senior Youth Group (14 years +) meet at 7pm in Lower Wyke Sunday

School. New people always welcome.

Sunday 19th November - Lower Wyke host Café Church at 10.30am in the Sunday School. A worship designed for all ages. This time it is our toy service where we bring toys to donate to our local food bank.

Sunday 26th November - Lower Wyke's Senior Youth Group (14 years +) meet at 7pm in Lower Wyke Sunday School. New people always welcome.

Back to our Future: Heritage Days

News from the Provincial Archive and Heritage Committee (PAHC).

It's the time of year when a number of our congregations share the rich history of their churches and settlements with visitors, and a good time is had by all. Not only is it a valuable outreach to our local communities, but we also often learn as much from our visitors as they learn from us!

We are indebted to our Yorkshire District representative, Mary Holmes, for this overview and photographs from Fulneck and Lower Wyke.

Across Yorkshire, our churches have been holding Heritage Open Days. At Fulneck we explored 'Who are these people?' by initially looking at our history as refugees moved from Moravia to Herrnhut.

The exhibition then took folk on a trip through Fulneck history, focusing on the lives of those

early settlers who lived and worked in the settlement. In addition, there were tours, the museum and a vintage car rally open for all.

Meanwhile, at Lower Wyke we held a Fun Day on the Green and an exhibition on the church.

Behind the scenes, the PAHC is preparing for its November workshop and field trip, where we will be exploring possibly the least publicly known church and settlement in the British Province, at Ockbrook.

We would love to hear from you!

If you feel that you are able to help the Heritage Committee in any capacity, have an interesting story to share, or would like to tell us about heritage events in your congregation, please contact: lorraine.parsons@moravian.org.uk.

Sr Jayne Brewster
PAHC

Unity Synod 2023

- Cape Town, South Africa



Members of Unity Synod from British Province © Br Philip Cooper

Unity Synod 2023 took place from Monday 4th to Sunday 10th September, at the Garden Court Hotel, in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Unity is the terminology used by the Moravian Church to refer to the worldwide Moravian Church. Unity Synod meets every seven years and brings together delegates from every Province of the Moravian Church in the world. Our own British Province has three delegates at Unity Synod. This year, the delegates were me and Sr Jane Carter, we were both elected at our Provincial Synod, and Br Edwin Quildan, as a member of our Provincial Board. In addition, Sr Roberta Hoey attended, in her capacity as the Chair of the Unity Board, and Br Joachim Kreusel, as one of the representatives of the bishops of the Unity. There were over ninety delegates and additional people present, and it was a fabulous experience to share in fellowship with so many fellow Moravians from around the world, including some friends that I have met before.

The language spoken at the synod is English, however, there are several interpreters.

Each morning, Synod began with worship and Bible study, and each evening ended with worship, led by the Synod Chaplain and delegates. There was a Cup of Covenant Service at the close of Synod. The variety of worship over the course of the week, with prayers, Bible readings and hymns in different languages, was deeply moving and uplifting.

On Thursday, we had the opportunity to visit Genadendal Moravian Church. This was the first mission station in South Africa, founded by the Moravian missionary, George Schmidt, who began mission work with the Khoi people in 1738. We were served light refreshments and given a very interesting, guided tour.

On Sunday, delegates had the opportunity to attend a worship service at one of three Moravian churches in the area. I attended worship at Maitland Moravian Church. I, along with other delegates, was warmly welcomed by the congregation. The service was led by Sr Angelene Swart and, following the service, we were served light refreshments. Other delegates went to Mitchells Plain Moravian Church and Khayelitsha Moravian Church.

There was such a large amount of business at the Synod, that it is impossible to include everything in this report. I must, therefore, be rather selective.

At the Synod, I was elected, as one of two representatives from the European region, to serve on the Unity Committee on Theology (UCOT).

Many reports, letters and proposals were presented to the Synod. In order to deal with this large amount of business, all delegates were put into one of five committees - finance; ministry; mission and culture; theological education; or faith and order and ecumenical relations. Each committee was given a share of the reports, letters and proposals to discuss, and bring back to the floor of Synod, with recommendations for the whole of Synod to discuss and decide upon.

As I reflected on these reports and proposals, I was encouraged by the growth of the Moravian Church in many different parts of the Unity. Ruvuma and Njombe in Tanzania, and Iringa, again, in Tanzania, were both designated as Mission Provinces, and Bolivia was accepted as a Prospective Mission Province. It is of special interest to the British Province, and a great joy, that it was agreed that the work in South Asia, which is presently a Mission Area, should be designated as a Mission Province. This decision was approved with acclaim. The British Province has had oversight of the work in South Asia for several years.

Sadly, there were, also, reports of conflict and disunity in certain Provinces.

The proposals covered a wide variety of topics. There was a proposal for the Moravian Church to be visible and vocal in the public arena in times of crisis and unrest, and where there was injustice, including supporting and disseminating statements from ecumenical bodies on these matters.

A proposal was passed to consider changes to language in certain sections of the Church Order of Unitas Fratrum (COUF), in cases where such language may have unintentional negative racial connotations.

There was a proposal passed asking the Unity Board to develop a format to achieve consistency of data throughout the Unity, regarding counting members

(communicant or otherwise), and the terms 'congregations' and 'parishes'.

Another proposal was passed to develop an initiative that would establish contextual theological programs throughout the Unity.

In response to the disagreements and conflicts mentioned above, that sometimes occur in Provinces, a proposal was carried agreeing a set of ethical guidelines for governance of the Moravian Church.

While noting the value of the book, 'Our Moravian Treasures', it was felt that the book does not cover all the historical and contemporary traditions, treasures and practices within the Unity. Therefore, a proposal was carried to produce an additional book, with the title, 'Our Hidden Moravian Treasures'.

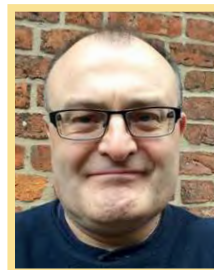
There was a long discussion and then a proposal passed in relation to the Moravian Church's past connection with the slave trade, and the need to acknowledge that past, to apologise, and to reaffirm the Unity's commitment towards racial reconciliation, the fight against modern forms of slavery and the elimination of all forms of exploitation.

It was resolved that the Unity Mission Agreement be included in COUF as a document of importance to the worldwide Unity, and that it be translated into Spanish, Swahili, German and other languages.

There was, also, a proposal passed regarding Russia's invasion of the Ukraine.

As I stated earlier in this article, there is so much more that I could write, but I hope this give you a taste of Unity Synod. It was a wonderful experience, which I shall always treasure. I would like thank the Provincial Synod of British Province for electing me, it was an honour and joy to attend.

Br Philip Cooper
Minister at Gomersal
and Wellhouse
Moravian Churches,
and Ecumenical
Officer for the
Moravian Church in
Great Britain and
Ireland



What is the vision of Irish Council of Churches and Irish Inter-Church Meeting going forward?

This article is the final article in a series marking the centenary of the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) and the fifty-year anniversary of the Ballymascanlon Talks which led to the formation of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM).

At the start of September, 'Being Churches Together in 21st Century Ireland' took place. This was an event held by the Irish Council of Churches and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting to consider how, together, Churches can effectively and authentically engage with one another in the public square today. The day also included the launch of *Called to be One*, the updated history of the Irish Council of Churches and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM) written by Rev Canon Dr Ian Ellis.

Later in the day, discussion groups explored how churches can work effectively on different issues affecting society today such as ethnic discrimination and integration, secularisation, economic inequality, the climate crisis, and sectarianism and reconciliation. These discussion topics from the event encompass much of our work as we look towards the future.

Churches in a more diverse Ireland

Ireland has become much more diverse since ICC and IICM were established. Church membership has changed and there are new churches throughout the island. With that in mind, our identity can be a divisive topic. Yet, as churches we must work towards reflecting the fact that each of us is created in the image of God and that our most important identity is found in Christ. The diversity of Ireland gives us as churches an opportunity to love like Christ, to welcome like Christ and to celebrate an Irish identity that provides for the fruitful participation and welcoming of the contribution of all in our society.

Churches in a more secular Ireland

In previous generations, the view of the church(es) had an assumed authority in the public square. This is no longer the case for many reasons. With this in mind, ICC and IICM have benefited from partnering with the Centre for Religion, Human Values, and International Relations at DCU to explore issues such as how to effectively contribute to debates in the public square, bringing Christian values and concerns to bear upon them in ways that are constructive and understood by the wider public. This work is ongoing as working groups continue to discuss issues as varied as the legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland, anti-immigrant hostility, the future of multilateralism, Brexit, housing policy, and food insecurity.

Churches in an unequal Ireland

Churches have a role in pursuing justice and wellbeing for all. Advocacy, practical help and fund-raising are ways churches



Bishop Brendan Leahy (IICM Co-Chair), Prof. Daire Keogh (president of DCU), with speakers Dr Nicola Brady (CTBI), Rev Livingstone Thompson (Moravian Church), Prof. Philip McDonagh (DCU) and Bishop Andrew Froster (ICM Co-Chair) at the Symposium in September.

can work together in this area. Many church bodies are in times of financial difficulties and so churches partnering to share resources make them better equipped to help those in need. The future work of ICC and IICM will continue to put those most at need in our society first, just as Christ walked alongside the outcast and the rejected. We continue to share our inter-church bible study, *In Six Months A Lot Can Change*, on housing and homelessness to bring churches together in discussing the housing crisis happening today.

Churches in a climate crisis

The unjust aspect of climate change is where those most affected have done least to cause it. Churches have a responsibility as stewards for creation to step into this space *together* and bring about positive change. We created Climate Affirmations (available on our website irishchurches.org/climate) to highlight climate justice as an important consideration for those in leadership roles within churches. We continue to keep care for creation as a priority in our agenda through working with our partner organisations, Trócaire and Christian Aid.

Churches in an Unreconciled Ireland

While the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was a transformational moment for our island, the work of reconciliation still has far to go. Recent events such as Brexit, the Protocol and the Stormont impasse represent further challenges. With the help of our Legacy Working Group we bring churches together to explore how we can effectively work together to engage with these tensions within the church itself and in the public square. It is important that our future acknowledges our past and so we must be self-critical in the role churches have played and confident in the role we can continue to play in the unfinished work of peace on this island.

While the above areas give an overview of ongoing priorities of both ICC and IICM, we are reminded of the underlying motivation for all that we do, which is *Connecting in Christ* - creating space to build relationships between churches at a national level. As we look towards the future, we pray that this will continue to be the foundation for all that we do.

If you would like to purchase a copy of *Called to be One* (€12/£10) please contact the Inter-Church Centre on 04890663145 or 02890663145.

Megan Ross
ICC Communications Officer





Project 32 Update: Changing our Heart's Capacity

The 8th Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History and Music

As many of you will know this is a wonderful biennial event which takes place in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in the USA, exploring Moravian history and music from the fifteenth to the twenty first centuries in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia. Such a rich heritage exists, and the conference provides a great opportunity to share current research and strengthen links right across the Unity. This year's conference was able to be held in person as the COVID threat was diminished but there was still the opportunity for presentations of papers to be made by Zoom. The conference spanned three days from Thursday 17th to Saturday 19th August 2023 with a packed programme of presentations interspersed with keynote lectures and special events.

Currently the Moravian communities of Bethlehem (USA), Gracehill (UK), and Herrnhut (Germany) are working together to join with Christiansfeld (Denmark) in becoming a transnational UNESCO world heritage site. Fittingly, these three words were taken as the theme for this year's conference which was addressing aspects of the relationships between Moravians and the World (natural, religious, socio-economic, political, etc.), Moravian Heritage and Moravian Sites (Sights or Cites), each of these perspectives, offering a unique way of thinking about Moravians and their interactions with others. Presentations were varied and fascinating with everything from studies on 'The Band System and Slavery on St Thomas 1736-1746' to 'The Inuit Voice in Moravian Music' and everything in between. These were hosted in the Moravian Seminary lecture theatres, close by to the Moravian Archives which was the attendees base for the conference. Here delegates were warmly welcomed on the first day and returned for breakfasts, lunches and the opportunity to socialise between sessions. Even lunchtimes were 'working round-table events' in that further presentations were given on potential upcoming projects and the potential use of digital technology in cultural heritage.

It was a long-held aspiration of mine to attend the conference and I was delighted this year, to have the opportunity. So, it turned out to be a family affair: David and I along with our youngest, Owen all travelled to the US adding on time for a holiday in Pennsylvania and New York. We did the 'full-fat' version, opting also to present papers, which seemed like a good idea at the time but not so much a couple of weeks beforehand in a very busy run up to the conference.

Also presenting from the British Province were Lorraine Parsons, Archivist at Church House, London, Rev Jared Stephens, Minister Ballinderry and Cliftonville and James Rollo, Open University. The only regret of the conference was that it proved impossible to attend everything as the two sessions ran parallel to each

other to accommodate the number of presentations.

This year's keynote lectures were given by Christina Petterson, independent researcher living in Christiansfeld Denmark who is currently scholar in residence at the Center for Moravian Studies and Winelle Kirton-Roberts, an ordained minister in the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province, currently pastor of the Geneva Moravian Fellowship in Switzerland. The subjects addressed were Christina's 'Inner and Outer aspects of Moravian Organisation in Bethlehem' and Winelle's 'Morale, Morality and Moravianism in Trinidad', both fascinating studies; a privilege to hear presentations from experts in their field.

Special events throughout the conference included a wonderful musical recital given by Jewel Smith and Martha Schrempel. I'm really lost for words to describe it, but it was a musical/historical masterpiece and full of joy; very (American) Moravian. This was followed by a balmy outdoor soiree involving delicious salads, pizza, ice-cream and warm fellowship.

The conference's concert was held at Moravian University in their beautiful Foy concert Hall. This was also an inspiring and uplifting experience, showcasing the wonderful Moravian musical tradition which exists here. The Lititz Moravian Collegium performed 'History you can hear' which does describe the evening up to a point, but I would add 'and can also feel'. The energy of the musicians and conductor was palpable, and with the audience invited to join with the hymns in the program, it made for a stimulating and joyful experience! The program was diverse and interestingly featured the serpent, a lesser-known instrument which was contemporary with the pieces.

This was a fitting close to the conference program, but another highlight was attending Central Moravian Church the next day where we were warmly welcomed and felt instantly at home. We were able to bring greetings and present the Minister, Rev Hopeton Clemens with a special chalice carved from historic yew, by one of our own congregation, Br David Ewart.

The conference was a wonderful way to meet with others who have a love of Moravian history and music, and we were also delighted to meet with friends from the early days of the World Heritage journey which, it is hard to believe started two decades ago. We were shown much kindness and generous hospitality wherever we went.

A purchase made from the Moravian Archive bookshop was a t-shirt with the Zinzendorf quote 'We have nothing to do, but to be happy' which was not difficult when attending the 8th Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History and Music!

Sr Sally Ann Johnston

Gracehill

On our Project 32 journey, we've recognised that the Moravian Church in the British Province is not currently fruitful in ways that lead to growth and sustainability. Something must change - but **what** specifically?

One key passage where Jesus talks about 'fruitfulness' is the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:4-15). The Sower is Jesus Himself; the seeds refer to the Word of God, and the different kinds of soils where seeds fell refer to different types of hearts of people who hear the word of God. All were willing to hear, but their hearts were receptive to God's word in different ways.

While called the parable of the Sower, it's more a Parable of the Soil. The Sower (Jesus) sows generously. But the rest of the parable's meaning centres around the soil. God is concerned about our HEART CAPACITY.

To summarise the point of the Parable of the Sower: 'A person's reception of God's Word is determined by the condition of their heart.'

A secondary lesson would be: 'Salvation is more than a superficial, albeit joyful, hearing of the gospel. Someone who truly has faith in God will go on to prove it is genuine faith by being FRUITFUL.'

Jesus calls people to give up being in charge of their lives, make Him the ruling King of their heart and develop the kind of righteous character that comes through dying to their own agenda, instead doing His will on earth.

To change the future of the Moravian Church, every single member must decide about changing the condition and capacity of their heart, to be a fruit-producing person in our church.

In total there's four kinds of soil in Jesus' parable. Which one are you at this moment?

1. The PATH (Matt. 13:4): this soil represents those who have hardened their hearts and refuse to listen to God's word. They simply reject it. Seeds cannot bring forth life in hardened soil. The Gospel cannot take root in a

hardened heart. A dangerous attitude to take.

2. The seed falling on ROCKY GROUND (Matt. 13:5): this represents a person whose initially enthusiastic, but their roots aren't deep. Life happened, tragedy struck, or they just got busy, and their distracted faith faded. Their faith never got below the surface and cannot survive the trials and hardships of life. Plants need deep roots to get water and nutrients to survive. Similarly, Christians need deep roots that continually renew and refresh their faith. Developing HOLY HABITS is important for our church's future!

3. Some fell in THORNS (Matt. 13:7): in fertile soil, it's not just good seeds that take root, thorns also take advantage of the soil. If so, thorns eventually choke out the seeds. This represents those who look good on the outside but have let sin creep in on the inside. Although they say that Jesus is Lord, their lives tell a different story. Eventually that path leads to death. This is why it's so important to guard our heart.

4. Some fell in GOOD SOIL (Matt. 13:8): this represents those who hear the Gospel and follow Jesus. Their roots go deep and can sustain the hardships of life. They have guarded their hearts to ensure no thorns can choke out their life. They are primed and ready to grow. And grow they do. Their lives produce more than they can imagine.

We are each the cultivators of our soil, our hearts. How you care for your heart will determine the life you grow. This is both a challenge and an encouragement.

If your heart is hard, your faith will be shallow, or if something is choking the life out of you it's never too late to change. Because of the work of Jesus, life can come from God into your life. It's not too late, and you haven't gone too far for Jesus to produce a fruitful crop in you.

The parable of the Sower meaning is a challenge to cultivate our heart. And it's also a promise. If you do that, the life that God will bring in you and through you will be greater than you can imagine. We can change our church for the better, if we all take responsibility to develop and expand our heart's capacity. The

difference is in the will. This is the meaning of the phrase: 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'

Things coming up in Project 32:

1. Thursday 26th October: We had a night with Bill Bickle, UK NCD National Director, explaining Project 32 and Natural Church Development. A video is available for those unable to attend, but would like information, contact Peter.

2. Introduction to Project 32 and NCD Brochures now available at your church, or via email.

3. Prayer:

a. November's Church Health Energiser's Prayer sheets. For those who will regularly pray for all our churches health development. Contact Peter to receive it monthly.

b. A National Day of Prayer and Consecration: 6th January 2024. Taking time out as a whole church to allow God to speak to us and change our heart's capacity. Put in your diary - details to follow.

4. NCD Congregation Health Surveys: during November to January, we are asking each member / attendee of our churches to take part in a short, uncomplicated health survey. Watch out for details in your area.

5. A call for Church Health Coaches in each District: we are looking for people who will help each church take their Church Health Survey results and optimise them to create strategic plans in each congregation. If you are interested or could recommend someone, contact Peter.

6. Developing Holy Habits: we need to cultivate our hearts. Get involved in each church's engagement with the important Holy Habits programme.

Please contact me (peter.dornan@moravian.org.uk) for more details on anything above.

Peter Dornan
Project 32
Coordinator



Is God calling you to Ordained Ministry?

There is an urgent need in the British Province for people to consider serving the province in Ordained Ministry. Might God be calling you to this role? Becoming a church minister can be a fulfilling and meaningful vocation, offering various benefits to those who pursue this path - but it also comes with its fair share of challenges. Below are some of the benefits and challenges for you to pray on:

Some of the benefits include:

1. *Spiritual Fulfilment:* Serving as a church minister allows individuals to deepen their own spiritual journey and connection with their faith, providing a sense of purpose and meaning in life.
2. *Helping Others:* As a minister, one has the opportunity to support and guide others in their spiritual and personal growth, offering counselling, comfort, and encouragement during challenging times.
3. *Making a Positive Impact:* Ministers often play a crucial role in their communities, promoting positive values, fostering unity, and addressing social issues through advocacy and outreach programs.
4. *Leadership Development:* Serving as a church minister involves leadership responsibilities, which can contribute to personal growth and honing valuable leadership skills.
5. *Sense of Community:* Being a minister means being part of a close-knit community of believers, fostering a supportive network of peers and mentors.
6. *Study and Education:* Pursuing a career as a church minister often involves continuous study and education, allowing ministers to deepen their knowledge of theology, philosophy, and pastoral care.
7. *Opportunities for Public Speaking:* Ministers regularly engage in public speaking, which can enhance communication skills and boost confidence.
8. *Celebrating Milestones:* Ministers have the privilege of participating in and officiating various religious ceremonies, including weddings, baptisms, and funerals, which can be deeply rewarding.
9. *Service and Dedication:* Becoming a minister is an act of service to others, dedicating one's life to helping and supporting those in need.
10. *Personal Growth and Reflection:* Serving as a minister requires continuous self-reflection and personal growth, as ministers are often called upon to inspire and guide others.
11. *Continual Learning:* Theological and pastoral education is an ongoing process for ministers, requiring a commitment to continuous learning and staying up-to-date with current issues.

All vocational professions have their challenges and blessings. Ordained Ministry is no different. Becoming a church minister comes with challenges and responsibilities. It requires commitment, empathy, and a willingness to address the needs of others while maintaining one's own well-being. The decision to become a minister is deeply personal and should be made with careful and prayerful consideration of one's

beliefs, calling, and commitment to serving others. Despite the challenges highlighted above, many ministers find their calling incredibly rewarding and find ways to overcome the difficulties they encounter. Support from fellow clergy members, ongoing education, and self-care practices are essential in navigating the challenges of ministry successfully. Please consider it. It is a huge joy and privilege to serve God, serve others and

to serve the Church is this role. I recommend it to you as a way of living a purposeful, meaningful, fulfilling and other-focused life. If you would like to explore this further, please contact me by email on peter.gubi@moravian.org.uk or speak to your Minister.

Br Peter Gubi
Chair of the Provincial Church Service Committee
Minister of Fairfield and Royton congregations

Some of the common challenges that ministers may face include:

1. *Emotional Toll:* Ministers often deal with people facing difficult life circumstances, such as grief, illness, and personal struggles, which can take an emotional toll on them.
2. *Time Demands:* Being a minister can be a demanding job, requiring a significant amount of time spent on pastoral care, sermon preparation, administrative tasks, and community involvement.
3. *Balancing Personal Life:* The demands of ministry can sometimes make it challenging for ministers to find a balance between their professional and personal lives.
4. *Conflict Resolution:* Dealing with interpersonal conflicts within the congregation or among church members can be emotionally taxing and require strong conflict resolution skills.
5. *Criticism and Pressure:* Ministers may face criticism from members of the congregation or encounter pressure to meet the expectations of various stakeholders.
6. *Financial Strain:* In some cases, ministers may struggle with financial challenges, especially if they serve in smaller congregations with limited resources.
7. *Spiritual Burnout:* Constantly tending to the spiritual needs of others while neglecting personal spiritual growth can lead to burnout and a sense of emptiness.
8. *Loneliness:* Despite being part of a community, ministers can experience feelings of isolation, as they may not always have peers within their congregation to share their struggles.
9. *High Expectations:* The role of a minister is often held to high standards, and the pressure to meet those expectations can be daunting.
10. *Crisis Management:* Ministers may need to handle crises within the congregation or larger community, requiring quick decision-making and a steady presence.

Report from the Moravian Women's Association (MWA) Retreat



© Sr Kerry Cain

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

*For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die,
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted,
a time to kill, and a time to heal,
a time to break down, and a time to build up,
a time to weep, and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn, and a time to dance,
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together,
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to seek, and a time to lose,
a time to keep, and a time to cast away,
a time to tear, and a time to sew,
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak,
a time to love, and a time to hate,
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

In this poem, Solomon declares that in God's wise plan everything is appropriately timed the poem is composed of pairs of events in human experience, birth vs. death, kill vs. heal, etc. All these times in life are appropriately appointed by God.

August was the time for several of our sisters to join at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire for the 2023 MWA retreat. This was my first MWA retreat, and I honestly didn't know what to expect.

Is there really a time for everything?

During the first session we reflected on our busy week as working women, mothers, and wives, this was quite the eye opener for many of us. Writing down our average weekly activities highlighted just how chaotic our lives are and which activities we neglect to make time for others, not surprisingly it was mostly the activities that we did for ourselves that were forfeited.

A time to kill and to heal, this session brought about an interesting discussion a result of which, we concluded, that the verse does not condone killing but rather conveys that our life here on earth will have its seasons. The phrase 'a time to kill' refers to the painful consequences of the sins of mankind, and the consequence of sin; killing has become an inescapable reality in our world.

In another session we were asked to take part in walking meditation whilst reflecting on the morning's session. Taking slow deliberate steps and paying attention to our own self, our bodies, and thoughts, we were asked to slowly breath in and out whilst walking back and forth with our eyes closed. During this time, we absorbed the beautiful countryside that God has

created around us, soaking up the smells and sound that we don't even notice during our busy life and often take for granted.

As I walked in the sunshine under the trees I was overwhelmed with a feeling of peace, of being with God so I thanked him for bringing me to the retreat. I realised that I don't set enough time aside from my busy life to walk slowly and appreciate God and his creation enough. This was definately one of the daily activities that I neglected and was very grateful to be given the opportunity to realise and rectify this.

A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. Simply put, life is an ongoing cycle of beginnings and endings. Of new life and loss, we must trust in God and put our faith in him. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted' (Matthew 5:4).

A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace or refrain, a time to search or give up searching, a time to keep and a time to throw away. We were asked to take a moment to note how God prepares us for each experience in our life. These three statements suggest that there are appropriate times to pull down and destroy the enemy and render them useless, throw away the harmful and alternatively there is a time to build bridges to stop war, to make peace, plant crops, cultivate and protect. We know that God works His purpose out in every situation of our lives, whether those circumstances are good or evil. Believers are strongly bonded by the love of God that nothing can separate us from Him. (Romans 8:35-39).

Over the three days and several more sessions we covered all the pairs in the verse using different mediums to express our understanding of each section. We used clay, built bridges, ran around with peas! And made a pin cushion. Some cried, everyone laughed, we danced, prayed, sang, and watched a film.

I came away from the retreat with a promise to myself to make more time for God.

Like many of us I neglect the things that matter most, not because I'm ungrateful, simply because I am a busy working mum who often takes for granted that God is with me and carries my forward through all life's ups and downs.

I can honestly say I have never felt so relaxed, refreshed, and renewed in mind, body, and faith.

This was defiantly not my last retreat!

Sr Kerry Cain
Dukinfield

Royton, Greater Manchester

We feel very happy to welcome our new minister Peter Gubi, who began his ministry at The Moravian Church Royton on Tuesday 1st August. Although as a congregation we managed to continue regular Sunday Worship, social events and other spiritual activities, we feel truly blessed to have Br Gubi as our minister. We thank everyone who helped us continue all our events and services and cannot thank them enough for supporting us during our period of interregnum.

Fairfield has also received Br Peter Gubi as their minister and we thoroughly enjoyed our Lancashire district gathering joining with them and Dukinfield Moravian Church on Sunday 25th June. We shared in worship and after church, coffee, tea and biscuits together. It was a wonderful time shared with our fellow Moravians. Sr Janet Warr as Chair of LDC gave thanks of appreciation to Br Martin during the service, who retires soon to north Wales. The theme of the morning was, in the words of the final hymn, 'Let there be love shared among us, let there be love.'

Other district events took place on Wednesday 10th May: the ladies of the MWA were invited to visit the ladies of the Dukinfield Circle, where they enjoyed a special Coronation afternoon tea.

We as a congregation celebrated the Coronation of their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla on Saturday 13th May with a faith tea. Everyone sat at a table, the full length of the church, festooned with flags, bunting and colourful napkins. Two tables, one for savouries and another for sweet dishes, overflowed with goodies people had brought. Jolly music played in the background and a coronation quiz tested our royal



© Sr Barbara Skiba

knowledge. It was indeed a banquet fit for a king and queen!

Holy Habits has been a feature in a few of our services as Sr Gillian Taylor has recently led three services at Royton focusing on this. On 4th June, she concentrated on Serving and Prayer and invited us to think of the ways in which we serve each other, the Church

and the wider community. We were also asked to consider Prayer - what it means and how, when and where we pray. As a result of this, we have reintroduced the Prayer Tree, which is now on the table at the back of Church for people to hang the names, places and situations in need of prayer.

In her service on 2nd July, Sr Gillian introduced the topic of Biblical Teaching, and how much can be learned from reading the Bible. The most recent service was on eating together, which as you can see, we at The Moravian Church Royton, find great pleasure in. Eating together is a way of sharing and sharing is a sign of love. I will leave you with the verse from the hymn, 'Let there be love shared among us', by unknown:

'Let there be love shared among us, let there be love in our eyes, may now your love sweep this nation, cause us O Lord to arise. Give us a fresh understanding filled with your love that is real, let there be love shared among us, let there be love.'

Sr Hannah Coope and Sr Gail Holden



© Sr Maud Hamill

Cliftonville, Northern Ireland

Vivienne and Lorraine who organised 115 Christmas shoe boxes for disadvantaged children in Eastern Europe once again were grateful for help in wrapping from Marian, Sharon, Demi, Winnie, Olga and John. Two good friends, Isobel McGuinness and Karen Dixon also provided knitted hats, cardigans and blankets for the children.

When Br Stephens was presiding at Gracehill harvest we were pleased to have Sr Sarah Groves at Cliftonville, and enjoyed hearing about the progress of the World Heritage project at Gracehill over a cup of tea afterwards.

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Received into Membership

8th October 2023 Margaret Barker Ockbrook

Marriages

12th August 2023 Michael Coope & Hannah Cooper Royton

FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Consecration

We are delighted to announce that Sr Christine Emanuel will be consecrated Presbyter at Hornsey Moravian Congregation on Saturday 18th November at 2pm. Sr Sarah Groves will be the presiding Bishop and the preachers will be Sr Jane Carter and Br Philip Cooper. We hope that many of you will be able to join us to be with Sr Emanuel and her congregation for this special occasion.

Can you please confirm numbers attending to Br David Howarth by 5th November. This will aid in preparing refreshments. All ministers are invited to robe from 1.30pm.

Provincial Statement regarding the conflict in Israel/Palestine

The Provincial Board (Moravian Church, British Province) is profoundly saddened by the significant escalation of violence in Israel and the Gaza Strip. We unequivocally condemn the perpetuation of evil and injustice and the indiscriminate actions resulting in unnecessary loss of lives. As of 11th October, the death toll in Israel from the Hamas attacks has reached at least 1,200, and more than 1,100 people have been killed by Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip. We ask you to join us in prayer for peace in the Holy Land.

Resources and information can be found through our partners, Christian Aid UK:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/.../israel-and-occupied...>

There is a Moravian undertaking in Palestine at Star Mountain Rehabilitation Centre. Star Mountain is located in Ramallah which is in the West Bank and at the time of writing the Centre remains open and safe.

Provincial Diary for November

2	Archives and Heritage (PAHC) Meeting	Ockbrook
4	Western District Conference (WDC)	Tytherton
9	Mission & Society	Online
16-17	Provincial Board	Church House
18	Consecration of Sr Christine Emanuel	Hornsey
19	Church Service Sunday	
26	Project 32 meeting	Online
26-30	Moravian Church Foundation (RH)	Suriname

Remembering Sara at Fetter Lane, London

Sara Abraha Uvloriak, an Inuit child born in Hebron, Labrador, died in London in December 1899, just four years old. Until this year her grave marker said only 'An Eskimo Child', and the year of her death was wrong. Discovering who she was and why she was at Fetter Lane was a journey that began in December 2007 when our minister at the time, Br David Newman, received a visit from 'a pleasant academic from Baffin Island'. That was Kenn Harper an historian and writer who visited Chelsea in search of the grave of this Inuit child from Labrador.

In 2021 local historian and friend of Fetter Lane, Br Ian Foster, came across a 2019 article that Kenn Harper had written for the Nunatsiak News in northern Canada where he detailed his visit to the Moravian Burial Ground in Chelsea, with a photo of what he called 'the lonely grave of an Inuit child'. By that time, we at Fetter Lane had set up a Heritage and Ecology working group made up of congregation members and others with an interest in our unique corner of Chelsea. With the help of Moravian archivist Lorraine Parsons, we quickly found out that the child whose marker we saw many times, was Sara Abraha Uvloriak, born in Hebron, Labrador on 19th December 1895.

We learned that she and most of her Moravian family - four siblings and her parents Abraham and Juliane - came to



© Br Ian Foster



London against the advice of the Moravian missionaries at Hebron, in one of the popular ethnographic exhibitions of Victorian and Edwardian times: in effect, 'Human Zoos'. An informative and disturbing documentary on the subject can be found detailing the sad experiences of an Inuit family who came to Europe about 10 years before Sara: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/video/trapped-human-zoo-010000207.html>.

Armed with information about this young child, the working group decided to replace her no-name stone with one showing her full name and correct dates. We debated how to respect her and her family but were conscious that we also needed to tell the story of a wrong done in those exhibitions by treating human beings in that callous

way. How to tell the story is a debate we continue to have as we show the history of Moravian Close. We raised funds from local sources and the stone was received this year.

We agreed that we needed to re-dedicate the gravestone and began to plan an event for ourselves and for the wider community. That simple service, led by Br David Howarth, took place on 29th September. Among the attendees were Caitlin Workman from the Canadian High Commission, Dr Michael Bravo from the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge University, Dr James Thompson, Chair of the Chelsea Society, and the Deputy Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Dori Schmetterling. We were also glad to welcome Bishops Br Joachim Kreusel and Sr Sarah Groves and we are grateful for the interest they've taken in our efforts. The event was Zoomed to an audience in Labrador including, we are pleased to note, a person with the surname, Uvloriak.

There is more work to do as the burial ground contains another marker, this time of a young Inuit man of whom we know little. We hope this is the beginning of a reconnection and of renewed study and appreciation of our shared history as Moravians.

After nearly 124 years, we see her name and we remember her.

Sr Cynthia Dize

Moravian Historical Magazines Available

I have an extra set of the Moravian Historical Magazines No.1-30, missing No.31,(if anyone has a spare No.31 please contact me, as I need it for my own set!) then Nos.32 and 33.

I am happy to post out to anyone in the UK who wants them, for a postage and packing cost of £15.

I also have an extra copy of the booklets: *The Moravians at Fulneck 1744 to the present day*, *Memories of JW Carey and Extracts from the journals of John Cennick: Moravian Evangelist*, if anyone is interested.

Please email: lyndagulwell57@gmail.com.

Fairfield 2024 Calendar

A full colour 2024 calendar is now available from Fairfield. It costs £8 which includes P & P. Please send your orders to Sr Janet Warr via email: jwarr@uwclub.net. The subject of the calendar is the cupola and clock at Fairfield and all profits will go towards its repair.



1	All Saints' Day
5	Bonfire / Guy Fawkes Day
12	Remembrance Sunday Diwali-Deepavali - Sikh/Hindu
13	Realisation of the Headship of Christ in 1741
12-19	Interfaith Week (www.interfaithweek.org)
13-17	Anti-Bullying Week (www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
19	International Men's Day World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (www.roadpeace.org)
30	St Andrew's Day

Dates to remember!

This new series takes a look at the
Provinces around the Unity

Moravian Church in Tanzania Rukwa Province



Mpanda Congregation

© Br Erord Rupia Simae

Introduction

The history of the Moravian Church is divided into four parts:

- a brief history of the establishment of the Sub-Province and the beginning of the Province;
- how the Parishes and Congregations on the border of Zambia and Tanzania received the Moravian Church;
- the congregation of Sumbawanga;
- how Parishes and congregations on the border of Rukwa Region and Songwe Region received the Moravian Church.

Brief history of the establishment of the Sub-Province and the beginning of the Province

The Sub-Province was officially opened in 1976 with 3,000 members, 40 congregations and six parishes and the first superintendent was Rev Jonas David Kasitu. He was given the task as a way of preparing his home area to become self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. The Western Tanganyika Province decided to open a sub-province in order to prepare the Rukwa area to be an independent province. After being given a Sub-Province, the parishes of Inyonga, Ilunde, Mpanda and their congregations also became part of the Sub-Province and even Mpanda Hostel.

From 30th August to 12th September 1981, after the Western Tanganyika Province was satisfied with the work of the Rukwa area they had to send the agenda to the Unity Board, which rejected Rukwa to become a full Province. The leadership of the Sub-Province and the leadership of the Western Tanganyika Province did not give up. They brought the agenda again to the Unity Board meeting held in Manchester on 14 May 1985 requesting the sub-province to become an independent province. The agenda was accepted and the vote was taken at twelve o'clock and majority was in favour.

On 5th January 1986 the official ceremony of the beginning of the Province was conducted by Bishop Kalindimya from Western Tanganyika Province. When Rukwa Province was officially opened, it had 12,000 Christians, 115 congregations and 11 Parishes. After looking at how the Sub-Province and the independent Province were established, let's look at the church under United Church of Zambia (UCZ).

How the Parishes and Congregations on the border of Zambia and Tanzania received the Moravian Church

In the 1960s, the parishes of Kasanga, Kaluko, Mpombwe and Mtula and their congregations were under the United Church of Zambia.

According to former Chairmen, namely Pastor John Edward Mbao and Pastor Donald Michael Siwalozi, the Kaluko Parish was started in 1975 and the first Pastor is Donald Michael Siwalozi. The Mpombwe Parish was opened in 1982 and the first pastor is Pastor Siwakwi. The Mtula Parish was opened in 1977 and Kasanga in the early 1970s. The parishes were started after an agreement with the United Church of Zambia to be under the Moravian Church Western Tanzania Province. The meeting was held in the Mpombwe

Parish in the 1970s.

After the agreement, another meeting was held in Sopa in the 1970s and suggested Kasanga to be the first Parish in the areas bordering Zambia.

How Parishes and congregations on the border of Rukwa Region and Songwe Region received the Moravian Church

Laela Parish which was started in 1973 under Southern Province joined Rukwa Province in 1986. Kalembe Parish which was established in 1936 under Southern Province was allowed to be under Rukwa Province in 1990. Madibila Parish which was established in 1967 under Southern Province was allowed to be under Rukwa Province in 1986. The Congregation of Kavifuti was founded in 1968 and is a product of the Congregation of Kalembe. The main reasons for the congregations I mentioned to join Rukwa Province are due to the geographical boundaries of Mbeya Region, currently Songwe Region and Rukwa Region. The borders followed the borders of the Region. Kipeta Parish like the other parishes I mentioned above was under the South West Province. This parish was established at the end of 1999 and on 18th June 2000 the South West Province allowed this parish and its congregations to join Rukwa Province. History explains that on 19th August 1987 an official meeting was held between Rev Malambugi the chairman of the South West Province and Rev Jonas David Kasitu to hand over the parish and its congregations to Rukwa Province.

How the congregation of Sumbawanga joined the Moravian Church

This congregation was founded in 1931 by various Christians from various denominations including the Presbyterian Church from Malawi, UCZ and LMS from Zambia, Moravians from Tabora and Mbeya, Lutheran and Anglican Churches from Iringa and Mbeya and it was a Sumbawanga protestant congregation.

In 1958 members of this congregation met to discuss the growth of the church and they also agreed to write a letter asking Western Tanzania Province to provide them with a pastor. The Anglican Church was not familiar with them; even they knew nothing about Anglican doctrine. The refusal was passed on to Bishop Kisanji who decided to meet with the CMS leaders from Kigoma. After conversation the decision was made that the Moravian Church from Tabora should take the Sumbawanga Congregation because it was very close to Tabora and in 1962 pastor John William Mbulumi was sent to Sumbawanga.

Conclusion

This is the history of the Moravian Church in Tanzania Rukwa Province in brief. Currently we have 6 districts, 88 parishes, 389 congregations, 1 active bishop and 1 retired bishop, 92 full time ordained pastors, 389 evangelists, 33 retired pastors, and a total of 78,100 members.

Rev. Erord Rupia Simae

Chairperson MCTRP (Moravian Church in Tanzania - Rukwa Province)

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