



MORAVIAN MESSENGER



Our time in Christiansfeld

On 16th September 2024, Sr Sarah Groves sent an email, expressing her vision for some members of the Gracehill Moravian Congregation and our friends to consider a visit to Christiansfeld in Denmark. She suggested that this trip could coincide with the Christiansfeld Church Anniversary on 10th August the following year, sparking the initial idea for what would become a very memorable journey.

We had both been discussing the possibility of visiting other congregations and learning a little more about the worldwide Moravian Church, so we jumped at the opportunity to participate in this trip.

We will always be grateful to Sr Sarah for her vision and her leadership during the planning of the programme. Our thanks also go to Rev Jørgen Bøytler from Christiansfeld, who was so quick to encourage us to visit and to help us develop a schedule for the time we were staying in their Moravian settlement. Steen Lundbye from the Museum Service in Christiansfeld also played a pivotal role in the organisation of the trip.

On 7th and 8th August 2025, 13 travellers began their journey to Denmark. The group included nine members from Gracehill Moravian Church (David and Sally Ann Johnston, Lorna and Ronnie Harper, Janet Wray, Derek and Lynda Bell and ourselves),



three from Fulneck Moravian Church (Mary and John Holmes and Ian Haggas) and Lorraine Parsons from Church House.

Our programme of activities began on Friday 8th August. We had some time to explore the town before we joined the Christiansfeld congregation as they celebrated 'Summerfest' in the Sisters' House Garden. We were greeted so warmly by everyone and the Danish pastry, honey cake and sweet treats on offer were incredibly tempting! We all toured the newly restored Museum wing in the Widows' House. This was followed by an evening of fellowship and a BBQ provided by the congregation.

On the Saturday, we had a tour of Christiansfeld, led by Br Jørgen and Steen. We visited the Church (including a look at their bell tower which Br Ronnie took particular interest in), the village square, Gudsageren (God's Acre), Widows' House, Sisters' House and the Museum. We were told about the history of the Moravian Church in Denmark and also the Christiansfeld road to their UNESCO nomination and experiences of life in a UNESCO site.

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Editorial

Since November 1994, apart from a short spell waiting for a manse to be ready, I have lived in large Georgian manses attached to the Church. This to me has been a blessing. Lots of room for children to play in, invite friends over and party in.

Over the years I have been able to gratefully accept lovely pieces of furniture from family which have real stories behind them - a wardrobe and dressing table that travelled from Chepstow to Trinidad and back with my grandmother, an elephant table from Mombasa that my Dad brought home, a table my grandfather made and so on. There are letters and cards I have kept and cherished over the years and so many pictures on the walls and photos in albums and boxes. They are part of who I am and what has formed me - my DNA written in wood, paint and paper.

Now in retirement I have to downsize to a lovely three bedroomed semi and so must choose what goes with me, what I can hand on to others and what has to be taken to the tip. It has been so difficult, and I am not writing for sympathy because I have been privileged to have all this space for so many years.

The experience has given me much to reflect on. I cannot imagine how people cope with life in Gaza, and many other places where their homes are bombed or bulldozed and nothing is left. Or what it feels like to be a refugee, deciding what can be carried and what must be left behind for others to pick over!

This 'moving' experience has also made me ponder on the wonderful Moravian theological idea of Essentials, Ministerials and Incidentals. In early Moravian theology the Essentials or the things of first importance were taken to be the action of God as Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer and the response from humankind to this action of God as Faith, Hope and Love. The ministerials, the things of second order were the things that helped people understand God and respond to his actions - so the Bible taught about God, the worship of the Church drew people together as a worshipping body, the sacraments enabled people to experience the real presence of Christ for example in bread and wine. The incidentals were the things of third order of importance that so often Christians would disagree about but really were not at the heart of faith.

So for me in a very practical way I need to work out what are the really important things, the first and second order things that are needed and space needs to be found for. Then what are the third order things that can or must be set aside because although I love them, they are not really at the essence of what I need for this new life. I know it will hurt to pass them on or leave them in at the tip, but it is a lesson I need in letting go!

What about you?

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team



Letters to Editorial Team

Dear Editorial Team,

Next year is a Synod year and I know that many people look forward to going to Synod, meeting old friends and being involved in the wider workings of our Church. Much as it is lovely to see familiar faces, it is essential to our future survival that as many people as possible get involved with the wider Church.

With small spread-out congregations there is a danger that each congregation becomes more insular and less involved with Provincial life, and without that connection it will become more difficult to maintain ourselves as a denomination in the UK.

One way of encouraging wider involvement in the Provincial Church is by getting people to attend Synod where they meet other Moravians and learn how the Church works and how their input is essential.

If your congregation regularly sends the same person to Synod, please could I suggest that you offer the chance to attend to someone else in the congregation. It would be lovely to see more younger people at Synod, but just sending someone different would help to spread the involvement.

I know this is a big ask as we do love going to Synod, but we have to face the fact that if we don't involve more people now, there won't be anyone to take our place in the future, and I am sure that none of us want that.

With every blessing and in the hope of seeing a raft of new faces at Synod next year.

Sr Sue Groves
Lay Pastor, Brockweir Moravian Church

Dear Brs & Srs,

Once more Summer Camp has been and gone and the C.H.M.T. (Carol Holdsworth Memorial Trust) was there to help financially which it has been able to now for more than ten years. In that time two things have occurred. Donors have moved on to their deserved rest leaving the Trust supporters numbers down to a handful, excluding the thumb, and all requests for help have been accomplished. Secondly, during those years, salaries, wages, pension values have grown, however, maybe by not as much as we may like.

Our Trustees are in no doubt about the charitable generosity of our congregation members and for only the second time in its existence we are appealing to new donors. Not regular donations, just a one-off gift. Our Summer Camps are vital to our Province's future, please consider financial support. Please contact Br Graham Mallinson on how to do so at: gdmallinson@hotmail.com.

Yours in God's love,
Br Alan Holdsworth

Br Edwin Quildan retired from congregation ministry in September after many years of service.

Br Edwin was an active member of the Hornsey congregation for several years, and after attending a lay training course in the Eastern District, he started leading worship and felt a call to ordained ministry.

Br Edwin worked for London Underground at that time, so he trained part-time for the ministry at Oakhill College between 1999 and 2002 and became a non-stipendiary minister, initially assisting at Bedford Queen's Park and Woodford Halse before being ordained by Br Geoffrey Birtill in 2003. He then served as assistant minister in Harlesden, where Sr Beth Torkington consecrated him as presbyter in 2007. In 2011, he was called to Fetter Lane.

Following retirement from his management role with London Underground in 2018, Br Edwin became a stipendiary minister, serving the Harlesden and Bedford Queen's Park congregations. In 2024, after a reorganisation of the ministers in the Eastern District, including his sisters Sr Christine Emanuel and Sr Susan Quildan-Foreman, he remained at Harlesden but swapped Bedford Queen's Park for Fetter Lane, where he works as part of a team ministry with Br Michael Newman.

In 2022, Br Edwin was elected to serve as a part-time Provincial Board member. His composed demeanour and systematic approach have been highly valued by fellow Board members. Additionally, in 2023, he represented the British Province as a delegate at the Unity Synod held in South Africa. He has also served on the committee of the Provincial Men's Fellowship.

Although Br Edwin is retiring from his congregation ministry, he will maintain his role as a part-time Provincial Board member, having been elected until the Synod in 2026. He will also continue to support the Eastern District and occasionally lead services. The entire province extends its gratitude to Br Edwin for his 23 years of dedicated ministerial service and conveys best wishes for his retirement.

Br Michael Newman
Provincial Board



Retirement of Rev Edwin Quildan

Rev Edwin Quildan has been with us at Harlesden full-time since 2018, and during these years, he has made a profound and lasting impact on

our congregation in many ways.

He has served as a faithful and dedicated Minister, never hesitating to go above and beyond the call of duty. There was nothing he wouldn't help with - whether it was a spiritual matter or something as practical as fixing a leaking toilet. If he couldn't solve the problem himself, he would find someone who could. His willingness to roll up his sleeves and get involved in every aspect of church life made him our jack of all trades.

Br Edwin never complained. He was a true shepherd to his flock, always looking out for every member and ensuring that no one was left behind. Even when members were unable to attend services, he made sure they received a recording of the month's message - demonstrating his care and commitment to keeping everyone spiritually connected.

We are reminded of Galatians 5:22-23, which tells us: 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.' These words beautifully reflect the character and ministry of Revd Edwin Quildan.

Harlesden will miss him dearly. Yet, as the Bible teaches us, to everything there is a season. This season of Br Edwin's journey with us is drawing to a close, and we are filled with both gratitude and sadness as we say goodbye.

With full hearts, we say: Well, done, good and faithful servant.

Sr Heather Anderson
Harlesden

Annual College Service of Northern College

On Saturday 13th September, I attended the 19th Annual College Service of Northern College. It was a special event, special to me because I received my College Leaving Certificate which states I am apparently fit to be a Minister of Word and Sacrament!

Members of my family attended the service with me and of course all my fellow students and tutors who have supported me so brilliantly over the past two years were also there.

During the service, those who had completed the lay preacher training at the college were also recognised, including four Moravian students Catherine and Stephen Gledhill (Lower Wyke), Sue Groves (Brockweir) and Penny Weir (Dukinfield).

It was also a special event because it was the last ever Northern College Annual College Service as Northern College has now merged with Northern Baptist College and the Luther King Centre to

become the Luther King Theological College.

The day started with pastries and coffee at 10am for early arrivals. The actual service was at 11am. Presentations were made to students who have completed their training and welcomes given to those students who are beginning training this September (sadly no Moravians). Rev Jenny Mills the URC Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action) delivered a lively and inspiring address based upon the resurrection appearance of Jesus to the disciples when they are out fishing on Lake Galilee as recorded in John's Gospel.

Towards the end of the service, a number of people representing different strands of the URC and Br Philip Cooper, representing the Moravian Church entrusted the training of future URC and Moravian students both lay and Ministerial to Luther King Theological College. Rev Kim Wasey, the new

president of Luther King accepted this responsibility, praying that the unity between the URC and Moravian Church and the College would be strengthened.

The day concluded with a wonderful BBQ prepared by the college's catering staff. Although we had had torrential rain during the service, the sun shone brightly so we were all able to sit outside in the College's Quad to enjoy the food.

I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed my time and studies at Northern College. The college has many one-off events and modules available to both lay and ordained and I would really recommend it as a place to learn, be stretched but to also experience genuine, loving Christian community.

Sr Janet Cooper
Fulneck





© Sr Mary Holmes

We learnt that Christiansfeld has existed since 1773 when the town was founded as a Moravian community. The town plan was drawn up along the same lines as the Moravian settlements in other countries. It had two parallel streets united by a square, around which the most important buildings were located. The initial buildings to be developed were 'the First House' (the community's first place of worship), the manse, the Principal's House and the hotel.

Saturday ended with dinner at the hotel and a chance for everyone to relax and reflect on everything we had learnt.

Sunday began early with a visit from the Moravian Brass Band who were playing hymns in various locations round the Settlement. We joined the Christiansfeld

congregation for worship and Holy Communion in the morning, and in the afternoon, we were very fortunate to be able to attend their Lovefeast. This was such a special service, and we all enjoyed hearing the Choir sing and seeing how the members served the Lovefeast in such a traditional manner. The beautiful blue and white cups and saucers and copper kettles, all so steeped in history are still used today. A walk to Christinero and a visit to the Christiansfeld Stove shop followed this service. The tiled stoves are not only incredibly beautiful, but they provide efficient and continuous heat with minimal fuel consumption.

Our final evening together ended with

dinner and reflections.

On Monday, it was time for many of us to depart.

This trip was incredibly special and the memories we have will stay with us for a long time. The group of people who joined us on this trip were amazing and friendships were quickly formed.

The hospitality of the members of the



© Sr Joanna Clarke

Moravian Church in Christiansfeld was humbling and their desire to share their knowledge, traditions and friendship with us, made this trip such a positive experience. We really hope we can return their kindness someday.

There is a common bond between our brothers and sisters in the Moravian Church which transcends all language and geographical boundaries.

Christiansfeld is such a peaceful, inspirational settlement, we would urge anyone who ever has the opportunity, to visit it. The images which will stay with us for many years are the Church building as the central point with the square and fountain in front of it, the Moravian Stars shining brightly in the windows of many of the buildings at night, and the beauty and simplicity of Gods Acre.

The only remaining question is, what Moravian congregation or settlement should we visit next?

Srs Rhebe and Joanna Clarke
Gracehill



© Br James Woolford

Coming Back Home: Returning to Camp as a Youth Leader

Walking back into summer camp after so many years away felt like stepping into a memory. The location may have changed but the emotions and echoes of my childhood summers remain the same. As a camper, this was the place where lifelong friendships were forged with fun, faith and late-night laughter. Returning now, not as a camper but as a youth leader, felt both familiar and completely new.

This time, my role wasn't to simply receive - it was to give. Instead of following a leader, I had become one. That shift was both humbling and a little daunting. I caught myself remembering how I used to look up to my leaders, hanging on their stories and admiring their patience and joy. Now, the responsibility rested with me to help create those same safe, joy-filled moments for today's campers.

It's funny how camp hasn't really changed, and yet it feels different because I have changed. The graces are still sung with the same gusto, the games are still filled with wild energy and dubious rules, and the Bible studies still spark deeper discussion, reflection and reverence. But what I see now is the work that goes into it all - the planning, the encouragement, the gentle reminders, the late nights ensuring every child feels included. As a camper, I only experienced the joy. As a leader, I get to witness the behind-the-scenes heart that makes that joy possible.

The most moving part was watching children experience the same moments that once shaped me. I saw them light up when they conquered their fears on the climbing wall. For me it was the high ropes course; nearly two decades later and I still regretted not being able to do it as a camper. This time I didn't let my fear get the better of me and I felt such satisfaction and lightness when I

Reflections from Summer Camp 2025 in Bell Heath, Stourbridge

completed it. I heard their voices rising in worship just as mine once did. And in Bible studies and simmer down, when they opened up about faith, questions, and life, I felt an overwhelming gratitude to be part of their journey - just as my leaders once were for me.

Returning as a youth leader was like coming full circle. It reminded me that the seeds planted in us as children often grow quietly until, years later, we find ourselves offering shade and strength to the next generation. Camp was where my faith took root, and now it's a place where I can help others plant theirs.

Stepping back into this sacred space as an adult didn't just feel like going back - it felt like going forward. Because now I see camp not only as a chapter of my own story, but as a living, ongoing story that I get to pass on. And that, perhaps, is the greatest gift of all.

Katie Groves-Bond

The view from a first time Summer Camp Leader



© Br James Woolford

Well, that was a blast!

I hadn't known what to expect and was a little surprised that my offer to be a leader (unfit and in my 60s) was accepted in the first place. But I was really surprised by how well the campers, and other leaders, received

me and, looked after me, even preventing me from being soaked in the water fight!

The week was a revelation: watching campers overcome challenges on the high wires and other physical feats, whilst at the same time being almost incapable of getting out of their beds in the morning. My Bible Study on Joseph was interesting as I realised that several of the children had very limited knowledge of the story but were eager to contribute to discussions about his life and how aspects of it related to their lives today. Watching their reactions to the various Simmer Down activities in the evenings was a delight, from quiet drawing, to Yoga, and a Take-Time meditation by

candlelight. As the brash mask of teenager slipped for even a few moments, their desire to know more about 'faith' was evident, and there were several quiet conversations during the week. Whilst I couldn't join in with the more physical activities, I did have great fun learning the game of 'Werewolf' which we played on several evenings.

It was a real joy to connect with this group of young people, and I am more convinced than ever of the importance of this experience for young people in their faith journey. It was an exhausting but most enjoyable week and I hope I will be asked back another year.

Sue Groves

My First Time at Summer Camp

I really enjoyed my first time at summer camp. Even though I was a bit nervous before I went, when I arrived there all of my worries faded away.



© Br James Woolford

We started things off with an ice breaker game called 'The Name Game'. We had to think of something we liked with the same letter of our first name. I chose cats, so I said, 'I'm Chris and I like cats.' I'm glad I wasn't last as I had six others before me. It was tricky but we worked together and got there in the end. This really helped us to remember everyone's names and to find out something about each other. The first activity we did was the climbing-wall. Some people got to the very top. I got halfway up myself with encouragement from my team. After that we had a quick break and then it was the zip wire and high ropes. The next day we did rifle shooting. I managed to hit three cans. As well as doing activities we did Bible study in house groups. I was in Dober. The other group was Nitschmann. We studied Bible stories and had discussions. It was all very enjoyable. I look forward to next year or the year after. I'm definitely a summer camper.

Christopher Mack



© Br James Woolford

My Final Time at Summer Camp

This summer, we spent five unforgettable days at our Christian summer camp, and every single one was filled with excitement, friendship, faith and amazing food!

Each day was packed with activities that kept us smiling and cheering each other on. We went rock climbing and ziplining, pushing ourselves to be brave and trust God as we faced challenges high above the ground. We played basketball and had a big sports day, where the whole camp attended a friendly competition. We even got to try rifle shooting, which was a brand-new experience for many of us!

In between all the action, we enjoyed some incredible meals. From hearty breakfasts that gave us energy for the day, to delicious dinners that brought everyone together, the food was just as much a highlight as the activities. Sitting around the table with friends after a busy day made camp feel like one big family.

We also showed our creative side by working on posters for our house teams, proudly displaying our team spirit. But most importantly, every day we gathered for Bible study, learning more about God's Word and growing deeper in faith. These times reminded us that camp isn't just about fun, but about drawing closer to Christ and encouraging one another in our walk with Him.

By the end of the five days, we had made amazing memories, enjoyed incredible food, built lifelong friendships, and strengthened our faith. Camp wasn't just a holiday, it was an adventure of faith, fun, fellowship, and food that we'll carry with us long after summer ends.

Harrison Dickinson

Uncovering the Moravian Legacy in the Caribbean: A New Research Journey

In recent years, public debate has returned time and again to the long shadow cast by slavery and colonialism. Across Europe, governments, businesses, and churches are being asked to re-examine their roles in this painful history. Within our own Moravian Church, a major new research project has begun to explore a central question: *what was the true role of the Moravian Church in the Caribbean, from its first missions in 1732 through to emancipation and beyond?*

This project, led by Dr Dave Gosse and Dr Julian Cresser of the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, has been commissioned by the Moravian Church Unity Board, with support from a global reference group of historians, theologians, and archivists. It promises to shed fresh light on the story of the Moravian Church in the Caribbean, a story that has often been told in glowing terms, but which demands a more nuanced and honest re-examination.

Why Now?

The study of slavery's legacies has expanded rapidly in recent decades. The University College London's Legacies of British Slavery project is one example of the ways academic and public historians are drawing attention to the lasting inequalities shaped by colonialism. Yet the role of churches in this history has often been treated unevenly. While some churches have been scrutinised for their direct involvement in the enslavement of Africans, the Moravians have frequently been portrayed in a more sympathetic light, as missionaries who sought out enslaved Africans deliberately when others did not.

But was this reputation entirely deserved? Did the Moravians truly stand apart from the system of plantation slavery, or were they, in complex ways, entangled in it? These are the questions at the heart of the new project.

The Research

The study covers Moravian ministry in the Caribbean from 1732 to the 1860s, spanning islands such as Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados, Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, and the Danish West Indies (today's US Virgin Islands). It will address four central themes:

1. Theology - How did Moravian theology address the reality of slavery? Did missionaries, as some scholars suggest, separate the 'spiritual' soul (worthy of salvation) from the 'enslaved' body?

2. Methodologies - How did missionaries support themselves financially, often arriving with no funding? Did they remain truly independent, or did they align with planters and colonial authorities?

3. Business Ventures - To what extent did the Church's economic activities in the Caribbean benefit from slavery and its aftermath?

4. Global Impact - How have Moravian commercial ventures and institutions, some of which remain successful today, been shaped by this history?

This ambitious project involves extensive archival research. Key collections will be consulted in Herrnhut (Germany), Muswell Hill (London), and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where the Moravian Archives hold missionaries' letters, journals, and church records. A carefully prepared annotated bibliography has already revealed strong coverage of Jamaica and the Danish islands in the existing literature, but major gaps remain for other territories.

What the Literature Tells Us So Far

The annotated bibliography already paints a vivid and sometimes challenging picture of Moravian involvement in the Caribbean. For example:

- **Burial practices** reveal that while Moravians preached equality, racial divides often persisted in cemeteries in St John and Barbados.
- **Enslaved leaders** such as Matthew, a driver on the Mesopotamia plantation in Jamaica, became key allies in encouraging others to stay within the Moravian fold, showing how missionaries relied on African agency as much as their own preaching.
- **Women's roles** were central. Recent scholarship highlights the pivotal part enslaved women played in expanding Moravian congregations in the Danish West Indies, often outnumbering men in baptismal and communion records. Their dictated letters, sometimes in Dutch Creole, show how they navigated faith, oppression, and agency.
- **Rebellions and resistance:** Research has shown that colonial authorities often viewed Moravians with suspicion, fearing that their preaching might encourage unrest. In some cases, Moravian converts were indeed drawn into the slave revolts of the 1830s and 1840s.

Such insights challenge us to see Moravian history not simply as a tale of piety and benevolence, but as a deeply human story in which the Church was both shaped by, and complicit in, the structures of slavery.

The Role of the Reference Group

To guide this sensitive work, the Moravian Unity has established a Research Reference Group. Members include Caribbean and European historians, theologians, archivists, and church leaders. Their role is to ensure the project maintains academic rigour, engages ethically with sensitive material, and communicates its findings effectively.

Among its members are figures such as Dr Craig Atwood and Dr Franck Crouch (USA), Dr Jessica Cronshagen (Germany), Lorraine Parsons (UK archivist), Rev. Dr Tuntufye Mwenisongole (Tanzania) and Dr Livingstone Thompson, who brings a Caribbean theological perspective. This global spread reflects the truly international nature of Moravian history, and the importance of ensuring that the findings reach and resonate with Moravians worldwide.

Why It Matters

For Moravians in Britain, this project is not just about uncovering Caribbean history. It is also about understanding our own story. The missions to the enslaved were approved, financed, and supported from Europe, including Moravians in England. Churches such as Fulneck, Fairfield, Ockbrook, and the archives at Muswell Hill, have their own archival records that connect directly to these questions.

At a time when society is reckoning with issues of racial justice, memory, and identity, the Moravian Church has an opportunity to lead with humility, transparency, and honesty. By engaging with the difficult truths of our past, we not only honour the experiences of those who suffered but also strengthen the credibility of our witness today.

Br Livingstone Thompson
Minister of Kilwarlin and
University Road
Moravian
Congregations,
Provincial Board



The British Province of the Moravian Church has joined our ecumenical partners in issuing a joint statement on 18th September calling for an end to the war in Gaza and the release of all hostages and prisoners after Israel launched its major ground offensive in Gaza City:

For two years now we have lamented daily the futile loss of life, the suffering and desolation that has unfolded across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory following the atrocities committed by Hamas on 7 October 2023.

We have called repeatedly for an end to the war in Gaza, that the hostages and prisoners be released, and that unfettered aid reach those in need. Despite our pleas, the conflict continues unabated with the deliberate and forcible mass displacement of civilians, ever more innocent blood shed, homes destroyed, cultural and religious sites damaged or destroyed, and children left dying from hunger and starvation.

We fear that the unfolding assault on Gaza City will only intensify the human suffering and misery as already malnourished and traumatised families are forced, yet again, to flee the horrors of this war. This deadly escalation is futile and must stop. We are encouraged to note that the Foreign Secretary has already described the Government of Israel's action as 'utterly reckless and appalling'. We share her assessment.

At a time of such devastation and inhumanity, we give thanks to the Churches of the Holy Land for their faithful service, profound solidarity and peaceful witness. We pray especially for the clergy and nuns at the Greek compound of Saint Porphyrius and the Latin compound of the Holy Family in Gaza City who have decided to remain and care for the hundreds of civilians that have sought refuge in these Church buildings. We pray too for Gaza Baptist Church, and the vital humanitarian

Signatories to the statement

Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster
President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Archbishop Stephen Cottrell
Archbishop of York

Rev Canon Graham Sparkes
Moderator, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI)

Dr Nicola Brady
General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

The Rev Dr Callan Slipper
Chair of Trustees, Churches Together in England (CTE)

Bishop Mike Royal
General Secretary, Churches Together in England

Rev Dr Jennifer Hurd
Chair, Cytûn - Churches Together in Wales

Dr Cynan Llwyd
General Secretary, Cytûn - Churches Together in Wales

Bishop Sarah Groves
President, Irish Council of Churches

Bishop Hovakim Manukyan
Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland

Revd. Lynn Green
General Secretary, The Baptist Union of Great Britain

Archbishop Dr Emmanuel B. Gbogboade
Acting President, Council of African and Caribbean Churches (CACC)

Rev Meelis Süld
General Secretary of the Council of Lutheran Churches in Great Britain

Most Rev Cherry Vann
Archbishop of Wales and Bishop of Monmouth, Church in Wales

Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson
Free Churches Group Moderator and CTE President

Archbishop Nikitas
Greek Orthodox Church, Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain and CTE President

work they are carrying out in partnership with Christian Mission to Gaza, and the Anglican Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza. Of all these faithful servants it can surely be said, The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)

We remain steadfastly against the evils that this war has unleashed and we stand firm in our belief that this is not the right way, that death and destruction will not triumph. As the Latin and Orthodox Patriarchs put it, "there can be no future based on captivity, displacement or revenge"; no lasting security as long as justice and integral human rights are denied (26 August 2025).

We urge the international community to do all in its power to ensure that Israel, as the occupying power, uphold its responsibilities under international law to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure and to ensure the provision of food, water, medicine and other essentials to those in need. Religious and cultural sites must be protected and respected.

Even though the consequences of this war will be long lasting, and the prospects for a just and lasting peace appear distant, we continue to have faith that a better future is possible - a peace that upholds all human dignity and that provides for the flourishing of all communities.

In these violent and dark days, we invite our churches not to despair, but to join with us in praying for an end to this war - to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122) - and, in working with the Churches in the Holy Land and with all those who have the courage to seek what is good, to help create and support the conditions of healing and life in this troubled land.

We pray that through these efforts we might deepen our own relationship with one another and in turn with Christ, our Saviour, the Prince of Peace.

Shaun Newton
General Secretary, Independent Methodist Churches

Rt Rev Paulina Hławiczka-Trotman
Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain and CTE President

Rev Alan Wardlow
President, Methodist Church in Ireland

Elaine Barnett
Lay Leader, Methodist Church in Ireland

Miss Roberta Hoey
Chair of the British Province, Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland

Rev Nan Powell-Davies
General Secretary, The Presbyterian Church of Wales

Miss Glynis Owen
Moderator, The Presbyterian Church of Wales

Adwoa Burnley
Clerk of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

Will Haire
Clerk of Ireland Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland

Commissioner Paul Main
Territorial Leader for The Salvation Army in the UK and Ireland

Most Rev Mark Strange
Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church

Bishop Simon Iheanacho
UK World Evangelism Church

Ms. Elinor Wyn Reynolds
General Secretary, Undeb Yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg (Union of Welsh Independents)

Revd. David Whyte
District Superintendent, Wesleyan Holiness Church

Journey from St Kitts to a Nursing Career in the United Kingdom

I grew up on the island of St Kitts in the Caribbean, nurtured by a close-knit community and a rich, vibrant culture.

Driven by ambition and a desire for advanced nursing training, I made the difficult decision to leave my family and my home. Along with many other young women, I travelled to the United Kingdom responding to the British Government's post-war recruitment campaigns, which began in 1948.

After the Second World War, nursing shortages in Britain became acute. The government responded with active recruitment, and by 1949 there were 54,000 open positions in the newly created National Health Service (NHS). Through joint efforts by the General Nursing Council and the Colonial Office, young women from the Caribbean were encouraged to come to Britain. By 1965, approximately 5,000 Caribbean nurses had joined British hospitals, forming what would later be called the Windrush Generation.

I arrived in the United Kingdom on a cold foggy day in April 1968 and immediately wanted to turn right around and go back to the Caribbean. My training began at Basingstoke and District Hospital in Hampshire. The reality, however, did not match what had been promised in the Caribbean recruitment materials. We had been assured of a three-year programme to become State Registered Nurses (SRN), but instead, we were enrolled in a two-year course for State Enrolled Nurses (SEN) - a qualification neither familiar to us nor recognised at home. During our training, the hospital Matron threatened deportation for dissent and confiscated our passports for the entire two-year period.

Although this situation left me feeling trapped, I remained determined to succeed. I successfully completed the SEN course and secured a place at a London hospital for further training for two and a half years, to achieve SRN status having negotiated a six-month reduction instead of the three years.

My three years training increased to five and a half years. I then moved to Leeds, Yorkshire, to train as a midwife for another year. While I had only encountered other black nurses in Hampshire and found the

local population welcoming, in Yorkshire I faced overt and covert racism.

Community clients sometimes refused to let me enter their homes, stating, 'they did not want Black people in their home'. On the labour ward, one patient's husband would not allow me to deliver his wife's baby, saying he did not want my 'black hands' to touch her and that he left South Africa to avoid people like me. Disturbed by this experience, I reported it to my Nursing Officer, but rather than being supportive, I was asked to leave the room so a white Nursing Officer could deliver the baby. Witnessing this behaviour being tolerated was deeply saddening.

After a short stint in hospital midwifery as a career progression, I worked as a community midwife for 27 years in a multicultural area of Leeds. The racism persisted, often coming from clients' partners, some of whom refused me entry to their homes with remarks that 'black people came to this country and took away the jobs of people who were born here' which became very familiar to me.

I also encountered institutional racism which limited my career. Despite having the right qualifications, I was often overlooked for promotion in favour of less experienced white colleagues. I was denied study leave whilst my white colleagues were granted leave to study for their diplomas. For two years I studied for my master's degree while working full time without a single day off. Throughout my career, faith in Christ and the comfort found in prayer were unwavering supports during difficult moments. Psalms 121 became my daily companion and provided guidance and reassurance ahead of each visit. Maintaining a sense of humour allowed me to savour moments of joy and fulfilment at work even amid adversity.

The qualities of resilience and determination that sustained me through-out decades of challenge remained central in my transition to retirement. This strength not only allowed me to persevere, but also enabled me to support others navigating similar barriers. My ability to adapt, maintain hope, and withstand systemic obstacles shaped both my professional journey and my

continuing commitment to advocacy.

Following a career marked by perseverance and achievement, my retirement became a time of reflection. After nearly three decades as a Community Midwife, retirement gave me the opportunity to reflect on both the achievements and ongoing struggles that defined my career. While I had hoped that my experiences would pave the way for progress, I found that many of the obstacles I had faced continues to challenge those who followed.

I wrote and published my first book five years ago: 'Everybody's Midwife', a diary which detailed my experience as a Community Midwife, the various challenges I encountered, and the racism I faced and overcame. More recently, my second book written during lock-down, 'From Strength to Strength', is a memoir which chronicles my journey from St. Kitts to Leeds, West Yorkshire. In these pages I shared stories of my voluntary contributions to the community while balancing the demands of a full-time midwife, motherhood to two sons, active church membership and leadership in several community organisations.

My books serve as a legacy for my children and grandchildren. The lessons drawn from my experience are clear: they must never allow the colour of their skin to become a prison but instead use it as a prism through which to view the world's possibilities.

I have now become an 'Active Listener' for a culturally sensitive Bereavement Support Group, and a Community Listener for Pregnant Mothers and parents of babies and toddlers up to two years old and also for anyone from a minority ethnic community who may be facing the same or similar problems that I encountered.

Listening to their stories, I am constantly amazed that the discrimination and barriers that once shaped my career remains entrenched in the system - a sobering reminder that despite the passage of forty years, little has changed.

Sr Gloria Hanley



Leeds and appalling that it is still entrenched in our society today. But this book draws you right into the experience of Caribbean society and you see from the inside what it means to be part of such a rich heritage. This book is engaging and enlightening, and I hope that many other people in the Church read her full account of her life in this book. I can't wait to read the book about her midwifery experiences in her book 'Everybody's Midwife'!

Sr Sarah Groves Editorial Team

Lindsey Newens (1960-2025)



A dearly missed colleague and friend

Anyone who has visited Church House or attended Synod over the past twenty years will almost certainly have met Lindsey. And if you did, you would remember the warmth of her welcome and her bright, breezy demeanour. Lindsey's big personality filled every room she entered, and that presence is now deeply missed by her colleagues in London and beyond.

Lindsey grew up in North London, the middle child of five, with two older sisters and two younger brothers. At the age of twelve, she moved with her family to Colwyn Bay in North Wales. With me having relatives in Old Colwyn and surrounding villages, Lindsey and I often reminisced about the town, its seafront and pier, and the school she attended. In conversation, we discovered that some of my cousins must have attended the same school when she did. It was during these years in Wales that Lindsey discovered her love of adventure - learning to sail on the waters of the Irish Sea and exploring the Eryri (Snowdonia) National Park.

Despite this, North London always felt like home to Lindsey. On returning there after leaving school, she began her working life in retail banking. After four years, she made the leap into IT at a commercial surveying firm in central London. Lindsey thrived in the city and made the most of her twenties, enjoying everything the West End, the City, and Canary Wharf had to offer - a far cry from her earlier days sailing, and exploring the mountains and lakes.

Her first experience of the charity sector came when she joined Help the Aged in Clerkenwell. Lindsey later reflected, 'This was a big gear change for me, to start working for a charity, but I really enjoyed the switch.' When her daughter Imogen and son Nathan were settled in school, Lindsey returned to work - this time as Administrator for the Moravian Church. Enjoying problem solving, which there has been much of, she gained much satisfaction from this role. No problem was too small and no matter how frustrating it could be, she was always determined to find a resolution and one which could be of benefit to the Church.

Of all Lindsey's qualities, her deep love for her children was perhaps the most striking. Yet she carried that same care into many areas of her life. A great animal lover - whether her own

or somebody else's - she often helped care for cats whose owners were away, making her way through Muswell Hill and surrounding area, treating each pet as though it were her own. She also undertook various volunteer work in her spare time, including with the homeless, new mothers, young people struggling with exam stress or those in a hospice, and as a first aid officer where she assisted with incidents that occurred out of work, ensuring that those affected made it home safely.

Lindsey was, above all, a people person. She loved the location of her office at Church House, overlooking the path to the gate. From her desk she kept a sharp eye on all who came and went, and few visitors escaped without being warmly greeted. She was always on hand to cheer people up and would buy the occasional bunch of flowers. However, there was one member of the Church House team who would fall foul of her humour on occasion - and that person is Gladys. Why, I hear you ask? Surely not Gladys! As Gladys has remarked recently, one of her lasting memories is of Lindsey appearing in reception and saying, 'Oh, I'm so thirsty' or 'Am dying of thirst here' or 'I could do with a drink'; 'and I would look puzzled at her thinking why doesn't she get a drink? There was no subtlety but then it clicks: she is reminding me it's time to get the drinks!'

Perhaps in contrast, although with a similar mischievous spirit at play, Lorraine 'recalls the training days for the first aid, which was undertaken successfully each time, but she [Lindsey] would mischievously enact the role of the patient with such glee it was difficult to get a satisfied response!'

Lindsey will be remembered for her strength of character, her positivity, and her love of family, friends, and animals. She was always eager to try something new, and she delighted in sharing stories of sailing, spa breaks, and shopping trips for dresses. Hers was truly a life well lived.

All at Church House, the Provincial Board, and her close colleagues Gladys, Lorraine, Sharon, and Graeme, are deeply grateful for Lindsey's presence, her work, and her friendship. She is greatly missed and will be difficult to replace.

Br David Howarth
Church House

Unexpected Pleasures of the Fading Summer

For many of us, it has been quite a busy summer. At Fetter Lane we've had all the regular meetings of our local community groups, charity book sales and a series of educational talks too. We've had a children's summer workshop with the Salvation Army and this year, a music festival on the August bank holiday. We even hosted a screening of the 1982 film 'First Fruits' about the first Moravians who travelled from Herrnhut to the West Indies to establish a mission there. Nonetheless with the season about to end and the school year about to start for many of us, I thought a suitable theme for the last Sunday in August would be: Renewal. We explored this theme through our bible readings (Titus 3: 3-8, 1 Chronicles 16: 28-36, Colossians 1:3-12) and as we followed the First Order of public worship, we considered the past and gave thanks, asked forgiveness and prayed for future strength.

Whenever I lead a sermon as part of our worship at Fetter Lane, though I usually know what I'll say, I rarely know exactly what I'll hear back. Typically, I ask questions in our small group - around our chosen theme - and see what reflections or thoughts we might all have together. My hope is to perhaps hear insightful perspectives that engage us all and lead us to a greater understanding of our subject. So, on the spirit of renewal, we considered what we had to look forward to in the coming months. Some of us looked forward to events like our Open House presentation later in September. Others looked forward to going back to work or to school and seeing friends again. A few of us were expecting to have new babies in the family in a few months' time - a most delightful thought. We considered our goals and plans from that Sunday until the end of the year.

Our first hymn, 'Jerusalem' by William Blake (NMH 512) led us consider how we interpret the meaning of hymns. Apparently certain churches now prefer not to sing it at all - Some say this is because it re-writes history by suggesting that biblical figures were able to 'walk upon England's mountains green'. Others say it's because the most popular musical setting was arranged during the First World War. Words such as 'Bring me my bow of burning gold, Bring me my arrows of desire, Bring me my spear, O clouds unfold! Bring me my chariot of fire' suggest the preparation for Holy war in



the name of the nation. It has been claimed that this contributed to the campaign to encourage young men to volunteer for the British army. Also the 'Dulce et Decorum Est' that poet Wilfred Owen spoke of in his poem of that name. All very important and interesting themes.

For our part, I chose 'Jerusalem' as a quintessential school hymn and so, in the spirit of 'Back to School' had a place. 'Jerusalem', more than anything it asks us questions; Did those feet in ancient times walk here? Could they have prospered among the 'dark satanic mills'? All interesting to think about ... and then a call to action - 'I will not cease from mental fight, Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, Till we have built Jerusalem, In England's green and pleasant land'. In discussing this we agreed that the idea of creating a better world through energy and ambition was very much in keeping with our theme ... and of course as some of Blake's family members were members of the Fetter Lane Congregation in the 1700s so it is part of our heritage.

However, our conversations about the hymn's content and context, was just the beginning of those inspired by a new friend, an unexpected guest, who came to us from - of all places - Jerusalem.

Olga was visiting London from Jerusalem and shared many interesting thoughts and stories with us. She explained that she had been born in Moscow and grew up in the Soviet Union with spiritual feelings but no direct experience of religion. In the early 2020s, just before the invasion of Ukraine, fears about the political climate in Russia led her to leave and make her home in Jerusalem. Although her family was ethnically Jewish, she had grown up without a knowledge of Jewish traditions or languages like Yiddish and Hebrew. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 she felt she had permission to learn about religions for herself and after a period of study she joined the Catholic faith because its practices and history appealed to her most. A marvellous example of personal renewal.

We talked while enjoying a cup of tea at the end of the service. I told her what I knew about the history of the site, about the notable graves in God's Acre and the story of the lion cub who once played there. She told me that she was visiting London enroute to see a friend in Oxford and decided to join us for worship to experience a Moravian service. I felt very privileged and hoped I hadn't made too many mistakes. She expressed her thanks for the welcome and perceived that we were both inclined to prioritise sincerity in worship over perfection in form.

Olga said that from her study of the history of Catholicism, she felt that the Protestant reformation - beginning with the work of Jan Hus - had inspired necessary change in the Catholic Church - Making it less hierarchical and much more focused on the realities of life as an ordinary Christian.

She expressed regret at the long persecution of the Moravians in Europe by the Catholic Church. I reflected that this was a long time ago and perhaps part of the Christian church coming to a fuller understanding of its mission. Also though, in reference to the film 'First Fruits', perhaps those centuries of persecution and oppression inspired those at Herrnhut identify with the plight of people enslaved in Caribbean, calling them to take action as missionaries I suggested. This ultimately supported the flowering of faith which eventually led to the re-establishment of the Fetter Lane Congregation by West Indian Christians in London in the 1960s. Renewal indeed.

We ended the service with the jaunty hymn 'I serve a living savour' (NMHB 209) followed by closing prayers, then we all departed into the warm Sunday afternoon to consider our plans and perhaps begin to work on them.

Br Herbert Daly
Fetter Lane



CONGREGATION NEWS



© Bec Howarth

Dukinfield, Cheshire

A touch of Hawaii was celebrated in Dukinfield for the Diamond couple - Christine and Bob Storey on their 60th Wedding anniversary.

We heard how the couple meet at a dance; and their 2025 party continued with dancing in the Church Garden to steel drums.

Family and friends were invited, memories were shared, laughs were had in an afternoon that brought together fellowship, fun and fund raising.

In lieu of gifts, attendees were asked for donations and an amazing total of £740 has bumped up Church funds to carry on our ministry at Dukinfield.

Although not in attendance, a certificate from King Charles and the Queen also marked this wonderful occasion.

Sr Penny Weir

Summer fun at Fetter Lane, London

'Tiny but Mighty' was our theme for an August play scheme for young children and their parents/carers at Fetter Lane, taking advantage of the space afforded by our historic burial ground. Building on successful one-day sessions during half terms, the outreach group, including members of the congregation, ministers and our friends, Abby and Phil Howe from Chelea Salvation Army, agreed to try a three-afternoon 'Holiday Club'.

Bible stories about seemingly insignificant people who made impressive contributions were our inspiration. For example, the story of David and Goliath was the idea around which we built (literally as it happens) one of our outdoor activities. Over the previous weeks, we had collected recyclable materials including boxes of all sizes, packing material,

© Fetter Lane Moravian Congregation



cardboard tubes, even foam scaffolding covers. Over the three afternoons, the giant and a couple of its friends took shape. On day three, two large catapults were built and the children worked together launching beanbags to topple the giants.

Other activities, just as creative, included decorating cupcakes, working with clay, stone (bug) painting, a 'tiny things' scavenger hunt,

sock puppets, butterfly prints, mini-Olympics and much more. Over the three days we welcomed around 25 children and their parents, some repeat visitors and some who were joining us for the first time.

Each afternoon ended with Chapel time, when we gathered for a story around our theme, then a lively and meaningful, puppet show, and a song with plenty of actions to show how each of us can 'shine from the inside out so the world can see You live in me.' October half-term - just around the corner.

Sr Cynthia Dize

FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Calls

The following changes to the ministry within the Eastern District.

Br Edwin Quildan will retire from stipendiary ministry at the end of September 2025. We extend our sincere appreciation for his 22 years of dedicated ordained service within the Eastern District and convey our best wishes for his retirement. Br Quildan will continue to serve as a non-stipendiary member of the Provincial Board.

Sr Christine Emanuel has received and accepted a Call to transition from non-stipendiary to stipendiary Ministry at the beginning of November 2025. Sr Emanuel will work a minimum of 32 hours per week (0.8 full-time).

Sr Emanuel will continue to serve the Bedford congregation and will also serve the Hornsey congregation in a team ministry with Br Newman. Br Newman will also continue to serve the Fetter Lane congregation and as a non-stipendiary member of the Provincial Board.

The Harlesden congregation will enter a period of interregnum until a minister from the United Reformed Church is appointed.

The Provincial Board are delighted that Sr Emanuel and Br Newman have accepted these revised Calls, and I am sure that you will give them your support as they begin these new chapters in their ministries. Please keep them, Br Quildan, and all the affected congregations in your prayers during this time of transition.

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptisms

7th Sept 2025 Montgomery Dougal Daniell McPhail Ockbrook

DATES TO REMEMBER

22 Sept - 5 Oct Fairtrade Fortnight (www.fairtrade.org.uk)
5 Homeless Sunday (www.housingjustice.org.uk)
6 Sukkot - Jewish
6-12 Good Money Week, previously National Ethical Investment Week (<http://goodmoneyweek.com>)
12-18 Prisons Week (www.prisonsworld.org)
12-19 Week of Prayer for World Peace (<https://weekofprayerforworldpeace.co.uk/>)
8 Anti-Slavery Day (www.antislaveryday.com)
20 Diwali-Deepavali - Sikh/Hindu
24 United Nations Day (www.un.org/en/events/unday)
26 Summer time ends
31 Halloween

Provincial Diary for October

1	Church Service Committee Working Group	Online
4	Yorkshire District Conference	Gomersal
7-8	Provincial Board Meeting	Church House
9	Estates Board	Hybrid
11	Lancashire District Conference	Online
11	Midlands District Conference	Online
11	Irish District Conference	Kilwarlin
18	Eastern District Conference	Bedford Queens Park
21	Faith & Order & Ecumenical Relations Committee	Online
28	Church Service Committee	Online

Mary Seacole Memorial

Who is Mary Seacole: Mary Seacole (1805-1881) was a black woman who took a big part in treating and looking after the injured soldiers during the Crimean war which started on 5 October 1853 and was brought to an end by the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 30 March 1856.

Mary Seacole's mother, a Jamaican woman, ran a boarding house where she treated soldiers and learned about traditional Caribbean medicine. Mary initially applied to be a nurse in the area near the Crimean and was rejected. Despite this rejection Mary Seacole travelled to the Crimea at her own expense and established a British Hotel near the battlefield, providing a place for soldiers to rest, eat, and receive medical attention.

After the war, Mary faced financial difficulties and became bankrupt. She published her autobiography, 'The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands', to raise funds.

What can we learn: Be decisive in all that you do. There could be bumps in the road that slows you up but stay focused. Do not give up; you have potential.

Br Edwin Quildan
Provincial Board



© Br Edwin Quildan

Introduction: When I was visiting a member of the Fetter Lane congregation in St Thomas Hospital, Westminster, Central London, I was given the opportunity to visit the memorial for Mary Seacole at the front of the hospital. I was initially taken by the size of the memorial and the inscriptions. Mary Seacole is normally remembered during black history month (October) to encourage others.



© Br Edwin Quildan



© Br Edwin Quildan

Winds of change?

Serene, motionless, silhouetted against the velvet sunset sky,
The custodians of the Clyde stand
Surveying deserted quays and the silent river below,
Where men and boys once sweated and toiled,
Bending, moulding, welding sheets of resilient steel,
Into tall, majestic liners, tankers and tugs.

Sparks flew as metal bonded to metal.
Shouts, bangs and laughter filled the air,
Through which the cranes glided,
And down below all was hustle and bustle,
Ships steamed by hooting at tugs chugging to and fro,
While trains rolled in with their loads of steel
And lorries threaded their way along the crowded quay.

That quay is now deserted, a home for screaming gulls,
Greedy strutting pigeons and memories of bygone days.
Open to all weathers, like the rusting cranes, the quays gleam
in the sun.
Rain lashes the steel towers washing the concrete below.
Only the wind moves the chains now - gently to and fro.
The Lord will send winds of change to abandon places
Transforming them once more into vibrant scenes.
When will that wind come?

By Sr Claire Summers



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