JUNE 2025

MORAVIAN MESSENGER

The Joy of the London Marathon

It was with some trepidation that I entered Greenwich Park to run my first London Marathon on the weekend after Easter. I had been training for a long time, beginning in September of 2024. However, an IT band injury in the last three months had seriously slowed my speed and made me worry whether I would complete it. I'm lucky that in my church there is someone who has the gift of healing and she had laid hands on my knee a few weeks before which seemed to aid my recovery a lot. I also have someone who has trained many marathoners and was willing to share knowledge with me and I had a good physio who I'd been seeing for the two months before. However, as I entered the pen ready to go out and race, I was nervous. I had run a 20-mile race six weeks before which was a disaster with lots of pain involved and so my prayer that day was for me to find ways to enjoy this often once in a lifetime experience.

I needn't have worried. God, the crowds, the spirit of London - all of it came together to create what is one of the happiest days of my life. I learnt a really valuable life lesson on the race about choosing joy over anything else and it is something I am still reflecting on. I entered the race a year ago with the hope of a set time which due to lots of factors never came to pass. It was something I had been wrestling with and only a few weeks before the race I had said how disappointed I would be if I didn't achieve that time. Well, how wrong I was!

I managed a 'slow' pace of 5 hours 37 mins but came off the course with so much energy to spare and so much joy. It truly was a golden running experience. The crowds were lined up over the whole 26.2-mile course and deep too! On the course I was offered sweets, beer, oranges, high fives and some very funny signs were held up for motivation. My favourites did include: 'Therapy is also an option', 'Slow down I'm trying to count you all', 'How's your mid-life crisis going' and the classic 'Pain is just the French word for bread'.

Did I go slower than I wanted? Absolutely, but I chose to when after a few miles into the race my watch died and I realised in that moment that I just wanted to enjoy the whole thing.

The Mall felt like the longest run as you knew you were so close! © Sportograf

Seasoned Marathon runners share a lot on social media about how the London Marathon really was the best marathon for crowd support and I knew in that moment, at around 5 miles in that I was experiencing exactly this. I didn't need to worry about finishing times today. The crowd were phenomenal, and it truly felt as a runner as if you got a glimpse into the best of humanity that day for hours and hours on end. What a blessing!

It was wonderful to see my family at miles 16 and miles 18 - with their banners prepared and flying high. I first heard them when our good friend Jimmy screamed out my name and then I saw them all. To their amusement I was bouncing along smiling. This was a great relief to all of them as only moments before they'd witnessed a man crying (presumably in some sort of pain at this stage) and I was surrounded by a lot of people struggling. I, on the other hand, was just enjoying life - taking all the sweets and high fives. Admiring all the runners around me and how epic this event is to experience.

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Editorial

I belong to a local photographic group where I am the newest member and the least experienced photographer. All the others have smart SLR digital cameras and use wonderful techniques to produce amazing pictures. In contrast I try and look for interesting things around me and do my best with an iPhone.

Our latest challenge is pictures taken on 21st June, the longest day. It has been suggested to me that I take photos of our Church windows and the reflections and patterns that they make on 21st June particularly during the golden hours in the morning and evening. I was blown away by this idea and am wondering how best to do this.

I don't see this as just a practical challenge but instead as somehow a spiritual reflection looking at something I take for granted and seeing it in a new light or in a deeper way. Light and shadows, patterns and structures captured for a fleeting moment to highlight beauty that is not often noticed.

It struck me as I was reading the challenge that it is a reflective practise that we as Christians ought to do more often. We could stop just looking at the surface and what is immediately apparent and see what is beyond and behind, and what the perspective of time and season does to a challenge. This is partly the lesson that we learn from the transfigured Jesus but also the ascended Jesus as we mark Ascension Day and then Pentecost.

At transfiguration the disciples see Jesus as he really is, the depth and the glory of the Son of Man out of time; following the resurrection and at the ascension they see Jesus fleetingly, in and out of their usual situations and they learn in a deeper way about this Son of Man; at Pentecost they recognise how this Son of Man remains with them in a new way and empowers them through the Holy Spirit.

We have been through a tough time as a Province of the Moravian Church recently and have tended only to see the problems and the immediate issues. We need to recover a sense of the glory and the power of the God we worship through Jesus Christ. Stopping and wondering, reflecting back on past issues and seeing God's provision, remembering that we are not left as orphans but that as Christians the Holy Spirit is still with us and can still be empowering.

Perhaps a place to focus on that would be on 17th June when we again have a Provincial Day of Prayer. How mighty it would be if we all, on that day, focused on the glory of God that day, both in our online prayer sessions and during the day - recognising God behind and before all things and Jesus our Saviour and friend who walks beside us at all times.

Then on 21st June get your phones and cameras out and see what pictures you can take on the longest day. Perhaps some of you could send your pictures into the Messenger with a note about what you have seen, where it was and what it meant to you. On a related note, please don't forget to send in pictures and short notes about memorials, murals, statutes, windows etc you see around and about you, whether they are in Church or in public places. This world is full of interest and maybe joyous or sad and reflective stories can be shared with us all!

Sr Sarah Groves
Editorial Team

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Romans chapter II v 33-36

I used to be addicted to the 'Hokey Cokey' then I turned myself around. Just a silly joke. I wondered if God understands our jokes. He certainly has much wisdom and knowledge, but sometimes it's hard to know His decisions and His thoughts. Who knows enough to give Him advice? And who has given Him so much that he needs to pay it back? For everything comes from Him and exists by His power and is intended for His glory. Paul has spent the last three chapters agonising of the issue of His people, the Jewish people. He is desperately keen that they should follow Christ and receive the gift of salvation, but he also acknowledges that most of them have rejected the offer of new life in Jesus. I love the way Paul ends this part of the letter. He does so in worship, celebrating the greatness of God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge. In the previous chapters he has given the best of His mind to setting out the dilemmas and His thinking about the situation. But at the end of the day he knows the limits of his understandings are very real, and he rests in fact that God's ways are infinitely beyond our ways. He uses verses from Isaiah 40 to acknowledge that there will never become a time when we are called upon to give God advice, and no one will ever be able to out give God. We all live with the many mysteries in this life. However hard we think things through, there will come a time when we have to face up to the fact that we haven't got all the answers. Whether you are wanting to explain the wonders of the sunset, or the beauty of a flower or the miracle of life, you will never arrive at a complete explanation. At that point we need to come to God in worship because in His greatness He is worthy of all our praise. The same is true if you reflect on the suffering of innocent people in the world, and the injustice that so many endure, all the cruelty that blights so many lives. It is important for us to apply the best of our efforts to these situations, but our thinking must finally lead us to worship a God whose love, mercy, and grace are beyond anything that we could achieve. As we reflect on the wonders, mysteries and whether our God will listen to our ways we need to come before God in worship and praise. If I may can I ask a question. For what specific reason are you worshipping God today?

Br Jamie Spencer

Raising Faith Monthly

from the Youth and Children's Committee (YCC)

Our article this month comes from Br James Woolford, member of the YCC and also the minister of the Moravian congregations at Baildon and Dukinfield.

We hope this inspires you as it did us, your YCC Committee: Sr Katie Groves-Bond, Br Kieran Hopton, Sr Lol Wood, Sr Claire Maxwell, Sr Rachel Hamilton and Br James Woolford.

Making Magic

© Br James Woolford

I remember the first time someone did a magic trick just for me. We were hosting an Open House event when my Mum was the minister of Wellhouse Moravian Church and John Danbury, a very successful and talented magician and performer, did a routine with me and some sponge balls that blew my mind. I'll never forget that feeling of wonderment and excitement and from that point on I've been fascinated with magic, but it took a lot of time before I had the belief and confidence to explore performing magic myself. Now, I use it frequently in services and have put together a special one-hour show called the 'Minister of Magic Show' where I use the power of magic to bring the message of the gospel alive for children and adults alike. In this article, I'll explain why I've done this and why I think it works as a way to teach people about God in a new and powerful way.

I believe a key part of a minister's role is to make the bible alive and to bring the message of love and hope that it brings to a new audience of people who have either never been introduced to it or have moved away from church. We're in a time where a lot of young people and children simply don't engage by sitting and listening to a person talk to them. We need to think hard about how we interact with young people and children and how to engage them by what we are saying. The other person who has been instrumental in the formation of my idea was a man who went by the name of Roly Bain. Roly (real name David Bain) was an Anglican priest who would entertain children and adults alike as a clown. I had the privilege of seeing Roly perform twice and watching the way he spoke about faith in a fun and light-hearted way, whilst performing various circus skills, was incredible. He brought faith alive to an audience who listened, laughed and were engaged throughout. This is my goal with what I do.

Whenever I've done magic during a service or a school assembly it has captured the imagination of the people there and stayed with them in the same way as that first sponge ball routine stayed with me. In a way, the theory is simple. If they remember the trick, they'll remember the message behind it and if they're entertained then they'll listen. My aim with my show is to take it around to schools, churches and anywhere that will host me and bring the gospel alive through the wonder of magic. The Good News of the gospel is for all, and it is Good News indeed so let us celebrate it with joy, fun and laughter.

The next 'Minister of Magic Show' is at Baildon Church on Saturday 7th June at 1pm.

The Joy of the London Marathon *(Continued)*

I distinctly remember at around mile 20 someone with a loudspeaker shouting out 'you should be all proud of yourselves as you are ahead of Joe Wicks!' It made me smile as mile 20-23 were the hardest miles of the marathon by far as I definitely had hit something of a wall. I managed though to rarely walk, partly as I worried my injury would really get bad with a change in pace, and partly because I did have reserve energy as I didn't run at my maximum that day. And it was blissful. When I think about the London Marathon, I only feel happiness.

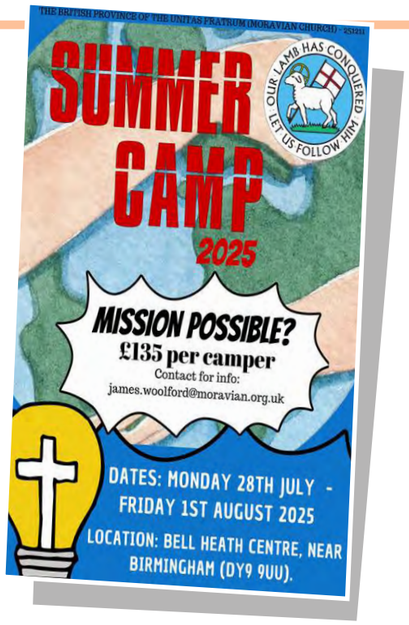
I was running to raise funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) and at this stage must thank all those who have supported and sponsored me as together we raised a massive £3,507 to date.

I have to say a big thank you to everyone who has gifted me their time and skills to be able to raise this amount. GOSH means such a lot to us as a family but they do such lifechanging work for children and it's been a real motivation to keep running on the long winter runs.

The marathon taught me to really choose joy and chase it! I hope to continue and not forget this lesson learnt.

Sr Claire Maxwell
Minister of Horton and Lower Wyke Moravian Congregations

Editors note: if you would like to donate to Great Ormond Street Hospital you can make a card payment through Church House by calling 020 8883 3409.



Report from the MWA Away Day

© Sr Eleanor Cooper

It was a pleasure to attend the Moravian Women's Association gathering, MWA Away Day, on 3rd May 2025 with the Royton women's circle. I first attended The Royton Moravian Church with my partner, and now husband Josh Cooper. We live in Sheffield and attend a Methodist church local to us, but we also visit Moravian churches in Yorkshire and Royton Moravian Church when we stay with family. With all the flitting about different churches it was lovely to be invited to attend the Moravian Women's gathering and to feel part of the community despite our somewhat nomadic church visiting habits!

We were gathered with women from almost every circle of the MWA across Britain and Ireland. The day was also a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Moravian Women's Association, originally the Moravian Women's Auxiliary.

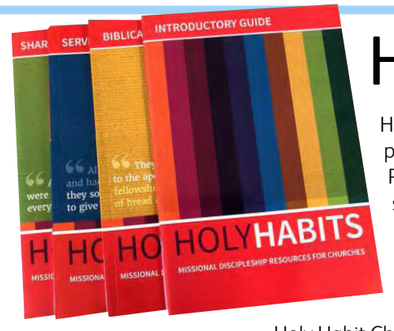
In the morning, we joined together in song, in prayer, and in fellowship. By the end of the morning service everyone had arrived, and the roll call began. This process included highlighting to everyone who has which roles within the association. The place of secretary remains open and requires a placeholder within the year and could be taken on by an individual or as a 'job share'. If you are interested, please contact Sr Gillian Taylor. We heard the monetary outcomes of the year and all the charities that had benefited from it. This reflected the generosity and hard work of the women in the MWA. Also, the 75th anniversary was marked by the President, Sr Gillian Taylor as she reflected on the history and future of the MWA, she included in her address a quote from the lady who set up the Auxiliary which was apt and timeless in its call to fellowship, service and unity.

After lunch we began the afternoon with group activities, be that prayer, meditation, tai chi, craft or a talk. All of these were well received by the groups, everyone I heard talking about them was pleased with the workshop they attended. I attended the craft activity and enjoyed making a felt glasses case. These activities were followed by a communion service and then refreshments and departures. There were cakes decorated to celebrate the 75th anniversary and there is also a new pin badge available to commemorate the milestone.

The day had an overarching sense of positivity as each person was pleased to be gathered with one another. The day was filled with fellowship and felt restful and rejuvenating despite the long day and long journeys. The daily watchword text for the 3rd May included the quotation: 'A good example has twice the value of good advice' (Albert Schweitzer). I feel that women of the church set examples to one another in various ways and in various settings, and it is good to allow ourselves to admire other women and be led by one another's example.

Thanks go to all those who led and organised, to Hall Green Community Church for hosting and catering, and to everyone involved in the running of the day.

Sr Eleanor Cooper



Holy Habits

Holy Habits has been part of the British Province staple diet since it was authorised by Synod and introduced in January 2022. Many congregations have a Holy Habit Champion, who has been key to the successful roll out of Holy Habits.

I would like to turn your attention to a metaphor about adverts. When you see an advert on the street, the television or other random places, what comes to your mind? I get intrigued by the different ways that our attention is being grabbed as we journey, as we view or even sit at home. Can I be considered 'old school' as the person with the sandwich board comes to mind? That person would be pacing up and down advertising the issues of the day. In our modern world I am taken by the whizzy electronic displays that are giving a new perspective to advertising a vast number of items. Holy Habits is no different, it is used to introduce us to alternative ways of sharing the Bible and the love of God to your community, your local area and the changing dynamic of society.

Here are just a few questions for you to discuss and grapple with:

a. What is the best way for your congregation to attract other people into our buildings or to our events?

b. The Holy Habits study material is a set of core books that can be used at any time. Can you express the habits in your life?

c. Are you able to spend two minutes more, each day with God in prayer or reflection?

d. Is God calling you to be actively involved with any of the Habits?

e. As we are in the season of spring and summer, can you organise an event to reflect eating together?

Br Edwin Quildan
Provincial Board

Tribute for Br Ted Wilson

(1936-2025)

© Helen Harbord

An abridged version of the original given at the funeral by his son, David Wilson.

Ted described himself as a Yorkshireman through and through and was born in Bradford in 1936. He had a happy childhood, living with his parents and two brothers. His father was a Moravian minister.

In 1944 they moved to Hornsey. Ted and his brother Pat cycled everywhere, even once through an underground tram tunnel, much to the surprise of passengers.

In 1948 they moved back to Yorkshire. At Pudsey Grammar school he joined the Science Club. Ted went to Liverpool University in 1955 reading geography and geology, graduating in 1958 with an Honours BSc in Geology. Whilst there he joined the university mountaineering club and the Student Christian Movement.

In 1956, he met Anne who was studying at a teacher training college near Liverpool. They married in 1960 in Bromborough and moved to Grayshott. Ted was finishing up his National Service, during which he had taught English, Maths and General Studies. One night he found himself leading a night exercise involving map reading and not being allowed torches he inventively found a glow-worm to light the map.

In 1961, Ted began work with British Rail in the Civil Engineering lab, and moved to Palmers Green in London where their first daughter, Julie, was born during the bitter winter of 1963. They then bought their first house in Rayleigh in Essex and stayed for a year or so.

Ted accepted the position of Soil Mechanics Engineer with Geotechnical in Gloucester, and moved to Dursley where they joined the local Methodist Church, where Ted led the youth group. In 1966, they added their son David to the family. Two years later they moved to Hucclecote and joined Hucclecote Methodist Church. In 1974 their second daughter Helen was born.

In 1979 he set up his own business and went independent. The work was similar to before; however land slips began to emerge as a speciality.

Ted was a Chartered Engineer, a Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, a Member of the Institute of Mining Engineers, and a Fellow of the Geological Society of London. In 1984, he acted as Visiting Examiner on the MSc course in Engineering Geology at Imperial College.

He had an inventive mind and was endlessly practical. Helen remembers the tiny pair of crutches he made for her toy monkey. Julie and David both appreciated the long desk units he made for their bedrooms, and were all fascinated by the clever toy railway that he rigged up, complete with tunnels, signal box and trees.

All three children remember driving around the carparks in the Forest of Dean when they were little, a child on his knee doing the steering and gears whilst he did the pedals. Later, he took them all out for practice and took each of them up the same long, steep, narrow track knowing full well it was a dead end and that the only way back was to reverse all the way down - as he said, it was the best way to learn.

Being a geologist, he read the land differently to most people. In addition to admiring a view, he would point out hill ranges, landslips, escarpments, soil creep and the strata on a rock face. His children all grew up on fossil hunting, and each had a proud collection of ammonites and fool's gold.

Ted came from a long line of Moravian ministers on both sides of his family, and one uncle was a missionary in Jamaica. Ted's father retired to the manse at Leominster Moravian Church in Herefordshire and helped out by taking the occasional service. Ted's parents are both buried there in God's Acre. Ted and Anne visited Leominster regularly for the monthly communion services right up until Ted's health made it untenable.

In 2013, Ted was a guide for the Gloucester Civic Trust and also conducted tours in French. He was interested in Anglo-Saxon churches and visited many of them.

Researching his own family history became a big passion. Ted enjoyed travelling and saw many parts of the world with Anne. A pilgrimage to the Holy Land with a Moravian group was very meaningful.

Another interest was watercolour painting, for which he had real talent. If you visit Anne now, you will see some of Ted's paintings, the most recent done in the last year of his life, at the art classes he attended at the Sue Ryder hospice.

Over the years, he gave many talks to different groups, including PROBUS, of which he was a member. He visited schools taking part in short plays designed to teach bible stories. This was through the Open the Book storytelling project run by the Bible Society.

Membership of Hucclecote Methodist Church played a big part in Ted and Anne's lives. He took on the roles of steward, senior steward, circuit steward, and member of the property committee, also mowing the lawns. He took part in 12 church plays and pantomimes, always preferring to play the dame, the baddy or the ugly sister.

We have every reason to rejoice and be thankful for Ted's long and eventful life. We remember the good times we shared with him. His gentle honesty, integrity, straightforward approach to, and enthusiasm for life will be remembered. Although he will be greatly missed, we are happy that he is now reunited with the beloved members of his family that have gone before him.

Building resilience in our children and young people *- How the Church helps*

Mental health impacts us all, especially our children and young people. It is often the young people on the outskirts of social groups, those with Special Educational Needs or those who feel rejected or different that are impacted most.

Building up resilience for children and young people can be about chatting with them, asking them about how they are getting along and looking for positives in their day. Another way is to join in a favourite activity, game or learn new skills together. Sometimes the simplest interactions can have the biggest impact.

One thing I like to do with my son is to ask him to tell me one good thing about the day he has had. This can be the smallest thing such as playing in the garden, but it is reinforcing the positive memories and emotions he has experienced. There is no real pressure to have a lengthy conversation, but he knows I'm interested and listening to him.

Other ways to build up resilience and improve mental health come from our interests, hobbies and things we enjoy doing. Over lockdown I learnt to knit and then to crochet and I joined an outdoor crochet group. For me this was a great way to relax and build up my own mental health at a time when so many of us felt isolated. Children and young people should be encouraged to develop and follow their own hobbies and interests, particularly in group settings when possible.

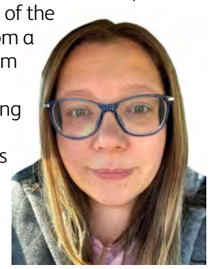
The Church's children and youth programmes can often be this safe place for our young children to grow, not only in faith and knowledge but also in mental resilience. Working in educational psychology I often see how having one or two key adults who offer nurturing safe spaces can positively impact a child's life: in their academic and in their social and emotional wellbeing, and promote positive self-worth.

The adults who volunteer in our churches for youth and children's work often provide this safe space. They encourage and support children and young people to be the best that they can be with no academic pressure. They and the churches provide spaces for sports, craft and fellowship with others, and this is so important for resilience and helping them grow into happy and nurtured young people.

We should all help and support our youth and children's workers to continue having positive interactions with the youngsters they work with. This can be in so many different ways, Children's Church, youth clubs, uniformed organisations, Messy Church etc and through prayer in church, taking an interest in the young people and even by making tea and biscuits.

There is a national shortage of leaders to work with children and young people so if this article has touched you in any way, please do see your minister or members of Church Committee to consider working with this important part of our Church.

If you are a parent worried about your child, think about ways in which you can carry out positive interactions. Perhaps you can relieve some of the stress that comes from a competitive and exam orientated school setting by encouraging down time and by sharing other interests with your child.



Sr Debbie Armstrong
Gracehill

© Br Mark Kernohan

Tercentenary of Cootehill

The town of Cootehill in Co. Cavan in Ireland (population 1,836 in 2020) is in 2025 celebrating its tercentenary having become recognised as a village known as Cootehill in 1725. The town once hosted seven Protestant denominations as well as a Roman Catholic chapel. As part of the celebrations the town brought back representatives of all the Protestant denominations and I, as Irish District Chair, along with Mandy were delighted to attend as Moravian representatives.

The ecumenical gathering was attended by representatives of all seven denominations even though only two of them still have a presence in the town and over 150 people from the town were present. Patrick Cassidy, a professor in history at Dublin University took the gathering through a potted history of each denomination in the town.

Even though I count myself as a Moravian History buff I wasn't aware that Cootehill at one time had 109 members and that a Moravian Society 43 miles to the southwest in Arvagh had 43. The English family that owned the estate prior to 1725 where the Coote family and an eldest son married into the Hill family from Hillsborough (near Kilwarlin). The earliest mention of Moravians in Cootehill is in 1751 when a group of people who had encountered Moravian preachers in Dublin invited them to Cootehill. John Cennick preached several times as did John Wesley.

The congregation closed with seven members in 1924 with the last minister being the Rev Walter Osborne Lang, who was retiring, conducting the last service: an infant baptism. Rev Lang upon his death in 1937 was buried in Dublin Moravian Burial Ground.

After the tercentenary service a tree was planted with all the denominations holding the shovel. Professor Cassidy then brought Mandy and I out to the old Moravian Church (now two semi-detached houses) and to see the old graveyard which was taken over by the Church of Ireland.

An interesting footnote is that Bishop John Humphrey Foy who served the British Province from 1934 to 1974 was a native of Cootehill until the family came North to Belfast for work. In the town of Cootehill there are four shops with the name 'Foy' above the door including the pub, but Professor Cassidy doesn't think they would be relations.

Professor Cassidy has provided a book on the Moravians in Cootehill which is now in the Irish District Archives at Gracehill.

Br Mark Kernohan
Irish District Chair

'What I Believe'

Moravian Messenger Editor Sr Sarah Groves interviews Sr Christine Emanuel

Sr Christine teaches Maths in a school in London and is the non-stipendiary minister of the Moravian Church in Bedford.

Tell us a bit about your background, family, education etc.

Both my parents were Antiguan, extremely hardworking, caring and loving. I was brought up in a Christian family and we attended Church, Sunday School and took part in many Church activities because God was a central part of our family life. This is what I hope I have continued with my own family.

How and when did you come to faith?

My parents were an integral part for me to coming to faith because they sowed the mustard seed as they led by example to their family. There have been a number of people also who have helped me grow deeper in my Christian faith. My Christian Endeavour Sunday School teachers, my brother and sisters, attending a Christian school, and the different denomination of churches I have attended during my life. A community of people are required to help a child of God to grow in faith.

What led you into the ministry and where did you train?

I think it may have been on the death of my father and mother that had the greatest impact on me and church life. Br Joachim Kreusel suggested that I should take the lay preachers' course, then take services, and that I should consider the ministry. I wrestled with the idea for several years. I felt that Jesus was calling me and finally, I decided to apply and was accepted for training at Northern College in Manchester.

How do you combine the roles of teaching and pastoring a church?

My experience of teaching has helped me in pastoring a church. I have been a Head of Year for many years which is a pastoral role in education. I have a good listening ear for anyone who would like to talk including students, teachers and staff, as well as providing the care and support to others when needed. If someone is in trouble I will always do my best to help because it is important as Jesus has told us to do so.

What has been your greatest joy so far in ministry and what do you struggle with?

My greatest joy in ministry is sharing my faith with others and supporting the congregations that I have been called to minister. It has been an amazing experience to serve, meet and walk alongside people within and outside the church in order that they can experience a relationship with Jesus Our Saviour.

I struggle with the bureaucracy of life and often remember our Moravian Motto 'In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, love.'

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

I do not think I have been angry with God, but I have questioned, why certain things happen? But then I remember the chorus, 'Abba Father, let me be Yours and Yours alone', and everything becomes clearer, and I have no need to question things.

Are you afraid to die, can you look beyond death, do you believe in a resurrection?

I am not afraid of death because I know what is waiting for me and us beyond our physical death. So, what is there to FEAR. We need to have FAITH. We need to TRUST the words of Jesus. Therefore, there is nothing to fear. I know that Jesus died to forgive our sins so that we will all have eternal life. So, what is there to fear when we have Jesus by our side.

Psalm 23 and the hymn 'God sent His Son they called Him Jesus' for me are crucial.

Why are so many people turning their backs on the church?

I do not think of it as so many people are turning their backs on the church. I think that so many people are being misled by the things of this world. Life is a journey and sometimes we are diverted on a different road. The church needs to be relevant to the people and needs to be a community to integrate people back into Christian life. Churches all around the world need to remember that it is God and the Holy Spirit who are making changes but because we cannot see it, it does not mean it is not happening. We are all instruments to help to bring about the growth of God's Kingdom.

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

I love music and I love to sing. I love all the different types of music depending on my mood, but Christian music reinforces my faith because it has great meaning, and it is a way of worshipping Our Lord. I have many favourites hymns but I love 'Leaning on the everlasting arms'.

I love to watch a range of different films from documentary, action, real-life story but I love comedy because I love to laugh.

However, the best book I love to read is the Bible because it is like a never-ending story which gives you different viewpoints and reflection as you read in depth from it.

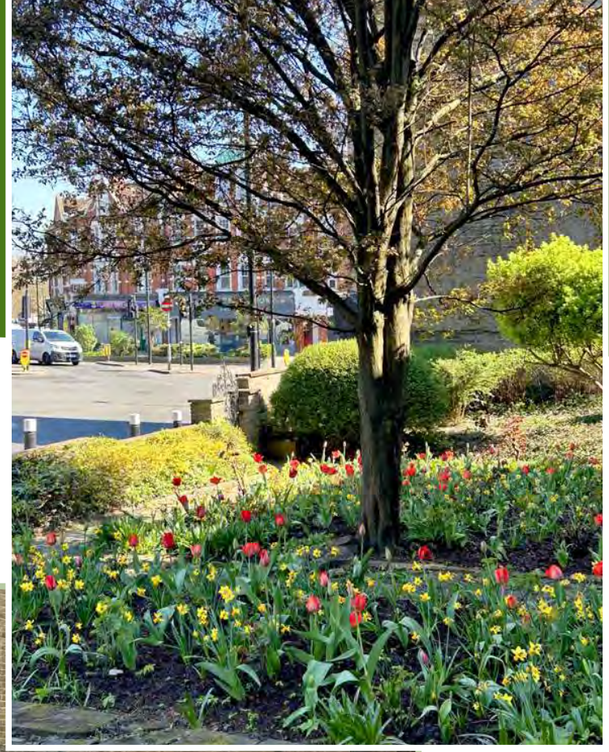
The place where you feel closest to God?

I feel closest to God in places of worship, prayer, reading the Bible, walking early in the morning seeing the stillness and calmness of the world. I feel closest to God being able to watch nature unfold, as the wind blows the trees, the beauty of the flowers, the clear blue sky. I feel closest to God when I am in my garden, or any outdoor spaces being still and mediating on his words.

What inscription on your gravestone or epitaph, if any?

None.

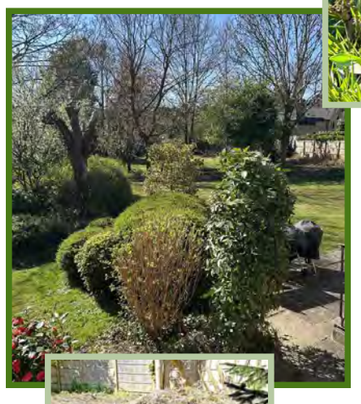
Moravian Church House Garden



© Sr Lindsey Newens

As those of you who have visited Church House in London will know, we are very fortunate to have a large front garden, and a much larger back garden. As an office we rarely have an opportunity to spend time in them, but earlier this year we were busy clearing the front of the overgrown ivy and other invasive plants and shrubs. We achieved this just in time to plant daffodils, tulips and some additional rose bushes.

We are situated on a very busy junction, close to the fire station, so it is usually pretty hectic, and the spring bulbs that have given a burst of colour and beauty have been very well received by all the passers by. Many stop to take photographs and comment on the transformation. It is lovely to see the smiles on their faces, and good to see them stop, take a few minutes out of their busy day, and enjoy the beauty of nature. The bulbs are wonderful for pollinators such as bees and wasps and we have also seen an increase in butterflies and different species of birds are also now visiting.



Bordering the back of the garden six new houses have been built. Despite local action groups petitioning against this development, it went ahead with the loss of many mature trees, and our garden has lost three trees in the process. There are over 8 million trees in London, and this number qualifies this city to be recognised as an official forest, but every tree that is felled is a home to so many birds and other wildlife that each loss is keenly felt.

Whilst we have made the front garden a place of beauty with stunning vibrant colours to brighten up the local area for all to enjoy, we are fully committed to increasing the biodiversity in the back garden. We have left the deadwood on site after the felling of our trees, and it is now a perfect home for so many insect species.

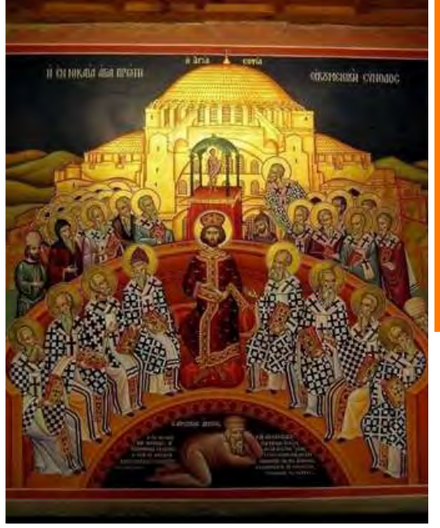
We have allowed the brambles more space to spread as they are one of nature's super foods for all types of animals. They form part of the natural diet of foxes, and they make their dens underneath. Almost 100 species of moths and micro moths feed on them, with around another 150 other species of insects too. So much biodiversity in one plant! We are working on re-wilding the back portion and filling the pond again.

The re-planting of our front garden has sparked so much local interest, that we are in the process of registering with the National Gardens Scheme which will mean that we will open our gates one (hopefully) sunny afternoon in 2026 and share this beautiful haven of peace with visitors. It will also give us a great opportunity to explain what the Moravian Church does and put ourselves firmly on the map. So many people used to just walk past with their heads down but now they stop and talk, and wonder what this building is, so it is a good opportunity to let them know about us.

Sr Lindsey Newens
Church House

The Council of Nicaea

2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council where the Nicene Creed, a statement of Christian faith, was first formulated and adopted



In 325, bishops from all over the Christian world assembled at Nicaea for the first great Council of the Church. They came from all over the Roman Empire to Nicaea in what is now northern Turkey, summoned by the Emperor Constantine to discuss matters of faith and order after the persecutions had ended.

In 303, the Roman Emperors had declared that Christians had no legal rights. Their presence offended the gods of old Rome, and to make Rome great again, the Christians had to be suppressed. At the time, Christians were about 10% of the Empire's population, living mainly in the cities. Any Christians in public life lost their positions, Christian leaders were imprisoned and sometimes killed, their books were burned, their treasures were seized, and their buildings confiscated or destroyed.

Constantine became Emperor in 306. His mother Helena was a Christian, and although Constantine was a Christian, he was not baptised until just before he died in 337. His Edict of Milan in 313 ended the persecution of Christians in the Empire. The following year there was a Council of bishops in Arles in southern France, to discuss the aftermath of the persecution. Three bishops from Britain were there: from London, Lincoln and York.

St Peter, the bishop of Alexandria, was one of the last martyrs in the persecution. He had a vision of the boy Jesus wearing a torn tunic. He asked, 'Saviour who tore your tunic?' and Jesus replied 'Arius the fool'. Arius was a teacher in Alexandria, struggling to explain how the Son related to the Father. Even though his explanation was declared a heresy, many accepted his teaching. This was a threat to the unity of the Church, and so Constantine summoned the bishops to Nicaea to set out clearly what the Church believed.

We can try to imagine what was involved. 318 bishops travelled to Turkey from as far away as Spain, bringing their colleagues and scribes. They all had to be accommodated in Nicaea, housed and fed for two months.

The Council opened on 20th May 325 and lasted into July. Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, was present, and recorded what happened. He said it was like Pentecost, with people from all nations.

On the first day the bishops seated on both sides of the room, waited for the Emperor. Eusebius flattered the Emperor and said he appeared like an angel from God, in a purple robe adorned with gold and jewels. This was the first time that the state became involved with governing the Church and was a sign of things to come.

The Council dealt with several matters of Church order such as how to set the date for Easter, which had varied according to local custom. The main business was to agree what the Church believed about the nature of the Son and how He related to the Father. Was there a time when the Son did not exist, and so the Father could not be called the Father? This was the teaching of Arius.

The problem arose when Christian teachers tried to put theological ideas from Hebrew thought and language into the Greek language and Greek ways of thinking. They were very different worlds.

The Hebrew worldview was represented by the temple in Jerusalem, where the holy of holies was hidden behind the veil. The main part of the temple represented the material world of time and change and matter. Beyond the veil was the source of creation, a state of divine Unity and light. There was no time and no matter, no beginning nor end, and no change.

Change and decay in all around I see,
O Thou who changest not, abide with me [Abide with me, Henry Francis Lyte]

Prophets and visionaries saw beyond the veil into the eternal state, where beings were distinct but not divided. They could not put this mystery into words. Later Christian teachers said that what was beyond words should not be written down; the ineffable mystery should remain unwritten.

But Constantine wanted clarity and order, and so the bishops tried to express the temple mystery in Greek for a Greek world:

God from God,
Light from Light
True God from true God,
Begotten not made,
Of one substance with the Father ... [Nicene Creed]

The Son was not created from some other substance; he was born from the Father and shared his being. He was eternally begotten, part of the mystery.

In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God [John 1:1]

The picture of the Council shows the bishops on both sides and Constantine, a larger figure, in splendid robes. Above him is St Peter's vision of the torn tunic, and beneath his feet are the defeated Arius and his writings.

The first Nicene Creed was expanded at a Council in Constantinople in 381, adding more detail about the Holy Spirit, and this is the Nicene Creed we say today.

Constantine later ordered fifty new Bibles to be made, to replace those lost in the persecution. One of them may be the Sinai Codex, identified in St Catherine's monastery, Sinai, in May 1844. Some of the Old Testament books are missing, and there are two extra books in the New Testament: the Letter of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas. It is now on permanent display in the British Library in London, next to St Pancras station. ***Why not go and see the oldest Bible in the world?***

Dr Margaret Barker
Methodist Preacher and Theologian

Fetter Lane, London

Talks at Moravian Close

'What are Moravians and how did you come to be in Chelsea?' That's a very familiar question from visitors and neighbours during our open house sessions each Friday. The other comment being - 'I pass by all the time and never knew you were here'.

Our Heritage and Ecology working group, following a successful series of history talks last summer, is rolling out a similar programme this year and held the first talk on the evening of 8th May. Provincial Archivist, Sr Lorraine Parsons, gave around 20 mostly local attendees a whirlwind account covering 600 years from Jan Hus to the present. Of particular interest was the attempt to establish a settlement following the purchase of the land by Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf in 1750.

A lively question and answer session followed, and it was clear that there was a real interest in the Moravian Church past and present; both in our history and in our beliefs. Next week Sr Naomi Hancock, a long-time member of our congregation, will present a talk looking at some of the notable individuals buried in God's Acre.

We advertised these two talks as a pair and hope they will contribute to our attempts at neighbourhood outreach. Further talks scheduled for this season will explore the ecosystem of the Close with a presentation by entomologist Imogen Newens-Hill and a look at the Mulberry trees of Chelsea presented by historian Peter Coles. We also hope to explore more about Moravian missions in Labrador and take a look at Hans Sloane's work in Jamaica and its links to Chelsea.

© Br Edwin Quildan

Interest of the wider community is evident, and we are fortunate to have the (sometimes daunting) responsibility of sustaining the Close both as witnesses to the faith and guardians of all aspects of its history.

Sr Cynthia Dize

© Br Edwin Quildan

Hornsey, London

It's been a busy time at Hornsey over the past few months. As a result of the NCD survey, a prayer group was set up through WhatsApp. On the first meeting, ten people took part and since then the group has grown and has been well attended. The format is a weekly video call where prayers can be shared, and prayers are also asked for and shared throughout the week via messages. We have members from our church as well as family members and friends who have joined us.

We've had the usual busy time of Lent and Easter. Our Lent Study group was held each week, which has been shared with the other Moravian Churches in the Eastern District. As is the Moravian tradition, the Hosanna Anthem was on Palm Sunday, doing ourselves proud with the singing and expertly led by our organist, Br Klaus. The Passion Week Readings were held online for the first three days. Our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services were held in the church, the second of which was followed by an outdoor service with other Hornsey churches which was attended by some of our members. We were grateful for the good weather for the occasion, as singing in the rain isn't what we would want. Finally, our Easter Sunday service was very well attended and enjoyed by all.

Over the past few months, there have been a few milestone birthdays which can't go unmentioned. We've had three 90th birthdays, Br Harry Hughes, Sr Ivy Thorpe and Sr Audrey Joseph, who had many of her family join her at church on the big day. On Easter Sunday, Br Ken Davis celebrated his 95th birthday with a lunch in the hall after the service. We hope you all enjoyed celebrating your special birthdays.

At Hornsey, we're lucky enough to have our own steel band, thanks to Br Harry and members of his family. We're regularly treated to hearing the band play for us at services, as well as other events throughout the year. They have already played for us a few times this year and on Sunday 27th April, after our morning service, anyone who wanted to was given the opportunity to have a go at playing the steel pans themselves. Quite a few members enjoyed trying this and quite possibly discovered that playing the steel pans isn't as easy as Harry and the band make it look. We're always very grateful to them for the music they provide for us.

The weather finally seems to have taken a turn for the better (hopefully not said too hastily) as we look forward to the warmer months for our summer events.

Sr Claire Newman

NOTICES

Friends of the Archive Day

You are invited to join the Friends of the Archive Day which will be held between 2pm-4pm on Saturday 19th July 2025.

We would like to celebrate and take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous support over the years of the Provincial Archives here at Moravian Church House in London and also invite others who would like to learn more or have interest about the work here.

There will be a talk about the work of the Keevills who helped to establish the Sikonge Hospital in Tanzania in 1923 and will also showcase some of the wonderful treasures within our archives. Refreshments will be provided.

Please let the archivist, Lorraine Parsons, know if you would like to join us on this day or have any queries by contacting her at archive@moravian.org.uk.

We look forward to seeing you here at Church House.

British Province of the Moravian Church invite you to join us for a

Day of Prayer

Tuesday 17th June 2025
from 12pm - 8 pm on Zoom

Feel free to drop in and out of Zoom as your schedule allows

Our theme: Deepening Faith

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82048156010?pwd=pcUW9CGH3q2dxkSUpJots3b1GCBNNk.1

Meeting ID: 820 4815 6010
Passcode: 609268

MORAVIAN PROVINCIAL MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

A warm invitation to a

CELEBRATION

at Ockbrook Moravian Church

Saturday 28th June 2025 at 1pm

This year's theme is on the work of the Mission Board with a presentation by Sr Jane Carter

Please bring your own food.
Tea & coffee will be available from 12.30pm

DATES TO REMEMBER

1 Shavuot - Jewish
5 World Environment Day ***(www.worldenvironmentday.global)***
6 Eid-ul-Adha - Muslim
8 Pentecost
9 Whit Monday
15 Trinity Sunday
Father's Day
16-22 Refugee Week ***www.refugeeweek.org.uk)***
17 Renewal of the Brethren's Church: beginning of the building of Herrnhut by the immigrants from Moravia in 1722
21 Summer Solstice
22 Windrush Day
26 International Day in Support of Victims of Torture ***(www.un.org/en/events/torturevictimsday/)***
27 Muharram/Islamic New Year

FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Calls

We are pleased to inform you of two Calls that have been accepted and will take effect from Monday 1st September 2025.

Br Woolford has accepted a Call to serve the Royton congregation, beginning on the above date. He has also received a long-term Call to serve the Dukinfield congregation. The date of Br Woolford's final service at Baildon will be agreed upon by him and the Baildon church committee.

While the Provincial Board rejoices that Br Woolford has accepted this Call, we are mindful that the Baildon congregation will be entering a period of interregnum.

Additionally, Br Peter Gubi's Call has been amended accordingly, and he will continue to serve the Fairfield congregation as at present.

We are confident you will join us in extending every blessing to Br Woolford and his family, and to Br Gubi, as they embrace these new chapters in their ministry.

Yours in Christ's service.

Provincial Diary for June

3-5	Unity Mission and Development Board	Tanzania
10-11	Provincial Board Meeting	Church House
17	Provincial Prayer Day	online
19	Church Service Committee Away Day	
26	British Mission Board	online
28	Provincial Men's Fellowship Day	Ockbrook

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptisms

18th May 2025	Iyanna Adewale-Folkes	Hornsey

Confirmations and Affirmations of Faith

20th April 2025	Hunter McCormick	Gracehill
20th April 2025	Bobby McCormick	Gracehill
20th April 2025	Archie McCormick	Gracehill
20th April 2025	Emma Dempsey	Gracehill
20th April 2025	Emma Thompson	Gracehill
20th April 2025	Hannah Boyd	Gracehill

Received into Membership

13th April 2025	Angelika Paddock	Bath Weston
4th May 2025	Peter Dunbevand	Fairfield

Deaths

7th March 2025	Everod Jacobs	Hornsey
11th March 2025	Cheryl Skepple	Hornsey
20th March 2025	Muriel Jeffrey	Hornsey
20th March 2025	Edward 'Ted' Wilson	Leominster
5th April 2025	Ian Michael Warr	Fairfield
7th April 2025	Penny Farrar	Kingswood
4th May 2025	David Mallalieu	Royton
8th May 2025	Iris Amelia Earl	Fairfield
11th May 2025	Sheila Walton	Royton
	(formerly a member at Salem)	

A series looking at favourite memorials

War Memorial window in Lydney Parish Church

© Sr Sarah Groves

It was by pure chance that I spotted this wonderful war memorial window. I had sneaked away from beloved family to attend early morning prayers in Lydney Parish Church in Gloucestershire. It was a glorious summer's day, and the sun was streaming in from the modern stained glass in the east window. From where I was seated in the choir stalls I could see some amazing figures in the window. They were people who had served in the Second World War, but the representation was unlike any I had seen before because the majority of the people depicted were women and there were other folk who rarely get mentioned in any war memorials.

Reading from left to right in the first window (top right of this page), the first figure is a Bevin Boy - these were men who instead of being sent to serve in the armed forces during the war were enlisted to go and work down the mines. So called because it was Ernest Bevin who initiated the scheme during the war because of the shortage of experienced miners and to help bolster coal production that was vital for the war effort. Approximately 48,000 men were conscripted to work in the underground mines but sadly records of those enlisted were destroyed at some point after the war. The only records of those conscripted are in the West Midlands region. This conscription has particular poignancy for me because my late minister Rev Dennis Monger at Brockweir Moravian Church had been a Bevin Boy and worked down the South Wales pits.

© Sr Sarah Groves

The second figure is a sailor in the Royal Navy; the two kneeling figures are Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) and the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS). The last figure in the window is a soldier in the British Army.

The other window (here on the left) depicts firstly a female member of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA). This was a civilian service that flew aircraft from factories to RAF squadrons and delivered supplies. Ten percent of their pilots were women and they flew fighters and bombers between airfields in the UK. In 1943 the women pilots were awarded equal pay with their male counterparts, a first for the British Government.

The second figure is a military nurse and kneeling beside her is a member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). This was founded in 1939 to free up RAF personnel for front line duties. By 1943, the WAAF had 182,000 members. WAAFs undertook a variety of roles, including compiling weather reports, maintaining aircraft, serving on airfields and working in intelligence.

The fourth figure is a female member of the Women's Land Army (WLA). At its peak there were more than 80,000 women in the WLA and they were needed to replace the male agricultural workers who had joined the armed forces. They could be sent anywhere to work and were active in farming and forestry, working in all weathers and conditions. Last in this tableau is a member of the RAF.

Thinking back to our recent VE day celebrations it is important to remember and give thanks for all, from near and far who gave so much that we could live in freedom and peace.

Sr Sarah Groves
Gracehill Moravian Church

The Moravian Messenger

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