

Moravian messenger



January
2006

Some thoughts for the New Year from Br. Robert Hopcroft (Provincial Board)



Looking Forwards

Considering that I'm often accused of being able to talk the hind leg off a donkey, especially by my family, I've had a really hard time trying to find something "to hang my hat on" after being asked to write a New Year Message by the Editor. Should it be an official greeting from the PEC or a personal message wishing you all the best for a New Year? Here we are in a month named after the Roman God Janus, an appropriate personification for the start of the new year. This particular Roman god had 2 faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we get rid of an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. We know through experience what we did wrong and what we did right, and hope to do better this year! Some people make ambitious new year's resolutions; others just take a deep breath and hope for the best.

So what have I got to look forward to? Well, looking back, our family prayers over the past eight months have been with Danielle and Paul as they await their new arrivals. So top of the list is the anticipation of

becoming a Grandparent early in the year (in fact it may already have happened!) and to twins at that! What joy there will be in the Hopcroft/Wilson households.

Then there's the small matter of the football. For many I know that this has no attraction whatsoever but for me, having been a PE and Games Teacher in a former life, I still have an avid interest in all sports. There's the Football World Cup to look forward to but for me there is something more important. The opportunity to see my team take on the might of Chelsea in the FA Cup early in January. Having supported the ups and downs (mostly downs!) of Huddersfield Town over the past 25 years I have the chance to see them play at Stamford Bridge. Their chances are slim by any stretch of the imagination but I hope it will be a good day out. And of course I now won't have far to travel either. I discovered taking Christopher and Richard along to watch Huddersfield play that, as a Minister of two congregations with other Provincial responsibilities, I could lose myself in the excitement of cheering my team on and shouting at the referee before returning to the real world once more. So come on you Terriers give me something to look forward to. Wembley here we come!

Thirdly there's the knowledge that God has given me, like everyone else, this gift of time. We have done nothing to deserve it or earn it and we cannot purchase it. It is given equally to each person. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, strong and weak - every man, woman and child has the same twenty four hours every day. You cannot bring back time. Once it is gone, it is gone. We may look ahead at a full year's block of time, but we really have no guarantee that we will experience any of it. We can waste it, worry over it, spend it on ourselves. Or, as good stewards, we can invest it in the Kingdom of God.

Finally, throughout the Province announcements are being made to encourage ALL members of the church to attend meetings to be held this month and next when the Provincial Board and members of the Finance Committee will be making a presentation about the position of the British Province of the Moravian Church and what the future holds for each of us. The Editor, in his editorial last month, called for information and this is exactly what the presentation hopes to give so that all members will have a much clearer idea about our present situation. I would urge everyone to make the effort to get to one of the meetings as this is perhaps one of the most important occasions for the members of the church to be called to for many years.

*"So as I face tomorrow with, ☐
its problems large and small,
I'll trust the God of miracles, ☐
give to Him my all." ☐☐
(Mission Praise)*

**A Happy and Adventurous
New Year to you all!**

INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

Diane Thornton recently visited the Holy Land and writes about

An Unforgettable Experience

YPMA NOTES

Paul Greenhough looks ahead to the project for Tanzania

Beth Torkington travels for this month's **The Diary**

A hymn suitable for New Year and Anniversaries

Hymn of the Month

Around the District Conferences

The Western and the Irish districts

Herrnhut Guest House and Conference Centre

Homelessness Sunday

Historical Magazine

Unitas Estates' Co. Ltd.

Trinity Moravian Church, Jamaica, celebrates 50 years of service **Fifty Years On**

PLUS ALL THE REGULAR FEATURES

• Your Letters • News from Congregations • Church House News Update •

A Return to Brutality?

War is, by its nature, brutal and destructive, which is why we must go on looking for other ways of dealing with international disputes and criminal national leaders. But through the centuries, various codes of conduct have been developed to try and control the worst excesses that war so easily can produce. The Christian doctrine of the Just War, the Geneva Convention and the U.N. Charter of Human Rights, have all tried to limit the destruction and horror of war.

In particular, torture has long been outlawed both as a way of punishing the enemy and of obtaining information. In time of conflict the Conventions and Agreements may not have been fully observed but they have been formally accepted by many countries and have stood as reminders of the sort of attitudes and behaviour we would expect from civilised societies.

It must be of great concern, then, that in recent years, especially during and since the war in Iraq and terrorist attacks in European and American cities, the U. S. and British governments do not seem to have been ready to

condemn wholeheartedly the use of torture and appear to have been ready to allow the transfer of suspects to countries where torture is still routine. We must be grateful for the recent judgement of the Law Lords that information obtained through torture is not admissible in British courts. But we surely need to go further than that and clearly condemn the use of torture under any circumstances. It dehumanises the victim but it also brings spiritual degradation to the torturer and to those who are prepared to stand by without protest when such things happen.

For the Christian, every human being is a child of God. In the light of that, we would expect the Churches to speak out clearly on this issue. It is a difficult matter and something most of us find hard to think about but we can make ourselves more aware and perhaps assist the victims of torture in some small way through such organisations as Action by Christians against Torture, Amnesty, and the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture.

Letters to the Editor



From Gemma Tugwell, Bath
Dear Br Editor,

I noticed in your letter column recently a reference to Denmark and the Moravian Settlement of Christiansfeld in South Jutland.

In May I travelled to Denmark with my family to see where my great grandfather, Peter Madsen Gubi, had set out from as a Moravian missionary.

Christiansfeld is a lovely place. The church is filled with white pews. The floor is wooden and was covered in sand. The sand was there to help keep the floor clean. The organ was magnificent too.

We visited the grave yard and it was very traditional, with the graves all flat. Men were buried on one side and ladies on the other and again everything was very plain, making everyone equal.

It was lovely and at the end of the day, we concluded our Danish experience by eating honey cakes for our dessert!

Yours sincerely,
Gemma Tugwell

From Br. D. Purnell, Ockbrook

Dear Br Editor,
Provincial Finances

Following your editorial in December's Messenger about the provincial finances, may I make a suggestion and put a request to the Provincial Board? We have been advised that 'local meetings' are to be held to help consider where we stand financially and Br Editor you have well expressed the need 'to provide the fullest information'. Whilst totally agreeing with this, I wonder if we could request that this information is made available to church members in advance of these local meetings?

I for one sometimes struggle to ask the appropriate questions when information is conveyed there and then, especially if it is of a more complicated nature.

To maximise the usefulness of these meetings, as well as this information being made 'transparently clear', it would be helpful if it was also provided well in advance, so as to allow everyone to understand the situation as fully as possible.

I am sure that it would be well received and very helpful, if this could be done.

Yours sincerely,
Derrick Purnell

From Br. Graham Mallinson, □ Lower Wyke

Dear Bro. Editor,

Friends of Moravian Summer Camp

Summer Camp, or Summer School if you are as old as me, has had a tremendous impact on the lives of young Moravians since 1948. This wonderful institution, started by Bro Edward Barker and carried on by many dedicated leaders, continues today under the splendid leadership of Paul & Patsy Holdsworth, Edwin Quildan and Sheila Mitchell. John Wilkinson's letter (Oct. 2005) summed it up so well. 'In short, Summer Camp is something we get right; our prayers and blessings go with those who carry it into the future'.

This treasure must be preserved, but there is a major problem. £7000 is required to cover the shortfall in the costs of Summer Camp 2006. This is a lot of money, but the more who are prepared to help, the easier the task will be.

To everyone, but in particular to all former Summer Campers (or Summer Schoolers!), I would make the following plea. Why not become a 'Friend of Moravian Summer Camp' by giving some financial support. All amounts, either large or small, will be greatly appreciated. Just give what you can.

Donations, made payable to the Moravian Union, can be sent to Sheila Mitchell, Provincial Youth & Children's Officer, 34 Pans Lane, Devizes, Wilts. SN10 5AL. If appropriate, the donation can also be Gift Aided, which will increase the amount by 28p in every pound. Brethren and sisters, the future of the Moravian Church will lie in the hands of our young people. Let us make sure that their love for the Lord, and for His church, can continue to be nurtured through the special times that are experienced, and enjoyed, at Summer Camp.

Yours sincerely,
Graham Mallinson



Millennium Volunteer Awards

Howard Groves Jones from Baildon and Sarah Elvidge from Horton have been presented with their 200 hours' Millennium Volunteer Award of Excellence. Howard completed over 260 hours by giving his time over a nine-month period to local Beavers, Cubs and Junior Church and was presented with his award at the Baildon Parade Service in September by Ian Haggas, Boys' Brigade District Vice President for Yorkshire and Humberside.

Sarah achieved her Award of Excellence by helping and organising the crèche, helping with the Girls Brigade and Church Holiday Club; attending a NHS Careers day in July, completing a St John Ambulance Caring for Life Course and attending the Moravian Church Child Protection course. She was presented with her award by Revd. Sarah Groves and Ian Haggas at the Advent Church Service.



Safe Space Training Evening



The Yorkshire District congregations have now all taken part in the Moravian Child Protection basic training course. Members and ministers from Fulneck, Gomersal, Lower Wyke and Wellhouse met together at Fulneck to explore the safest ways to work with children and young people and what to do if things go wrong.

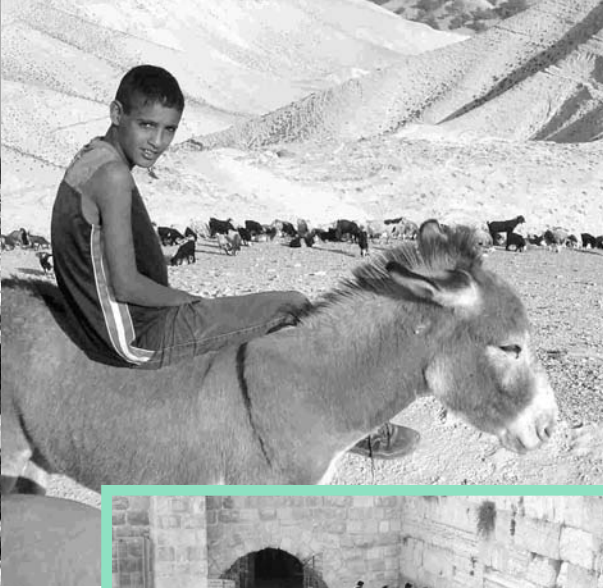
Really Safe Space

The safest place to be has surely now become the Baildon Moravian Church, particularly at Parade Services. Their three Scout leaders, one Cub leader, two Beaver leaders, two Brownie leaders and one Junior Church leader took up the challenge of learning Emergency Response First Aid with Mrs Sue Nicholas from Shipley College. They are pictured here with Sue Nicholas after being presented with their certificates at the September Parade Service.





Diane and Steve Thornton (Lower Wyke) recently visited the Holy Land. Diane writes about



An Unforgettable Experience

A dream shattered or a dream fulfilled! Perhaps you are like me and not sure if you want to visit the present day Israel. Part of me didn't want to dispel the image I had of "Sunday School" Jesus stories - people walking round in long clothes and open sandals guiding donkeys laden with olives, figs dates etc . Part of me wanted to see what Jesus saw and walk with Him in His own land. So I went with an open mind, knowing it would be different but not quite knowing what to expect in the Holy land.

What of the land? It encompasses high mountains and low seas, rich fertile agricultural soil and arid desert/wilderness areas, busy modern cities and impoverished villages, modern churches and many archaeological sites revealing previous civilisations, all in what is really a very small country.



the middle of the peaceful, tranquil lake was very special. The rolling hills round the lake more than fulfilled my dreams as we visited the area where Jesus preached the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, fed the 5,000 and cooked breakfast on the beach for the disciples when they had been fishing all night. Singing "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult" on the shore while the cool water lapped at our feet is another memory I shall treasure.

We stepped back in time in Nazareth into a living museum where we saw a man with his donkey ploughing in the fields and working the wine and olive press. The terraced land and stony ground brought the parable of the sower to mind. We were fed by authentically dressed women in a reconstructed house adorned with oil lamps and earthenware pots. All this we felt comfortable with from our childhood storybooks.

We followed Jesus to Jerusalem to retrace the steps of His last week. We stood at Dominus Flevit "the Tear Drop Church" looking over Jerusalem where Jesus wept knowing what was to happen to him in the week ahead. He would weep today, I think, seeing what a turbulent city Jerusalem still is. We walked with Jesus down the Mount of Olives, where the crowds waved their palm branches and sang Hosanna, to the Garden of Gethsemane. The olive trees are so old and contorted that they are believed to date back to the time of Jesus. The Church of All Nations near the Garden of Gethsemane has windows made of alabaster making everything dark and reflecting the darkest time in Jesus' life. Then up the Via Dolorosa - the way of the cross - to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Here again in the narrow, twisting streets one could imagine the agony of carrying His cross through the jostling, sneering crowds. No-one is sure exactly where many events took place and Calvary is remembered in two different places - the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Garden Tomb. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre has been restored and maintained since the 4th century when Constantine supposedly located the tomb and is today shared by 6 faiths; Latin Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenians, Syrian, Copts and Ethiopians. I didn't feel comfortable with the surrounding adornments at this site and felt more at ease with the Garden Tomb, a first Century tomb but only discovered in 1883. The important thing is that both tombs are empty - Christ has risen and lives with us today.

Bethlehem I found a very sad place. We did sing "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" in a shepherd's cave on the hillside but the town itself has a quiet, poor air about it. The residents are severely restricted, as are Palestinians throughout the whole



of the West Bank, by the Israeli government. Road blocks appear for no reason. They are not allowed to travel freely in their own vehicles. Taxi, bus or donkey only are allowed. The great 28ft wall being built is going through Bethlehem separating Palestinians from the best hospitals, schools and other amenities. These facts have been substantiated by an email that I have received from Star Mountain in Ramallah where life is very difficult for our brothers and sisters there. Sadly I was not able to visit Star Mountain but we did visit The Bethlehem Rehabilitation Centre founded in 1960 as one of Leonard Cheshire's homes. Their vision adopts the "Holistic Approach" to rehabilitation and the words on a monument outside the entrance said it all for me "Every patient is first and foremost a human being".

There were many more things I could recount like renewing our baptismal vows in the River Jordan, our visit to Safed - the Jewish Town, seeing the Bar Mitzvahs taking place at the Western or Wailing Wall and sunset on Mount Arbel. We did fun things as well like walking through Hezekiah's tunnel under Jerusalem knee deep in fresh spring water for 3/4 hour, covering ourselves in mud and then swimming (or floating) in the Dead Sea and going up in a cable car to Masada 1500ft above the Dead Sea which itself is the lowest place on the earth's surface.

Some things I did find disturbing but the pilgrimage was a wonderful experience one not to be missed. We were lucky to be there at the end of the Muslim celebrations for Ramadan and during the Jewish Festival of Sukkot as we were able to see for ourselves how other faiths celebrate and live out their religion. My best memory is sitting on the Mount of Beatitudes over looking the Lake Galilee, with the Golan Heights as a back drop, listening to the Beatitudes being read. I could not help but think of the MWA devotional theme last year " the Be-Attitudes" and of all we have to "be thankful" for - me as an individual, as part of that small group of Christians and to quote the hymn "the green and pleasant land" in which we live.

Yes, I am glad I went and truly feel that I have been "Walking with God "(the MWA devotional theme for this year) through His Son Jesus Christ.

(A group of Moravians, led by Paul Holdsworth, will visit the Holy Land at the end of January.)



Elim Wish List

The Elim Home Wish List project closed at the end of 2005. I am pleased to announce the amount of money donated enabled every item on the list to be provided. The total donated was £6837.71. The money in excess, after providing all items requested, was also sent to the Elim Home. Thank you to all who contributed. Your generosity was overwhelming.

Y.P.M.A. Project for Tanzania

I am pleased to announce that Y.P.M.A. will be contributing to the building of a new Library and Dormitory at the Lusangi Moravian Junior Seminary in the Sikonge district, Tabora, Western Tanzania.

The following is some information about the Junior Seminary.

Lusangi Moravian Junior Seminary is one of the Institutes working under the Moravian church in Western Tanzania.

The institute provides both secular and Bible studies. There are three departments:

Bible School: This section prepares material for those preparing for ministry in congregations within the province. It also gives a chance to other Moravian provinces for their evangelists to learn. The course on evangelism takes 2 years.

Theological college: This department provides theological education to people preparing for pastoral work. It provides a certificate in theology. It is planned to start a Diploma course in Theology for ordained pastors. This will start this year, 2006.

High school: This branch of the institute deals with secondary education at an advanced level and after 2 years' study students receive the advanced secondary level certificate.

Since the seminary was established in 1989 it has been using old buildings which are now unsatisfactory and out of date. The population of students has been increasing, this being due to the good performance of the school.

The school has never been able to build a modern library due to lack of money. A small room where approximately 6 - 10 students can sit to read books is being used as a library.

There is also a problem of suitable dormitory accommodation for the girl students. The dormitory building accommodates only 20 students. To meet the goal of having at least 60 girl students a new building is required. The number of girl students joining the school is increasing each year.

The project is to build a library to accommodate at least 50 - 60 people at once. The building will have a store for the books and an office for the librarian. The building will have two toilets for males and females

The project also includes a dormitory for at least 40 girls.

I am hoping that we will be able to obtain information on the progress as the library and dormitories are being built.

Paul Greenhough



These I found very moving and added an extra spiritual dimension to our week.

We flew into Tel Aviv through the night and travelled by coach to Lake Galilee arriving at sun rise. Watching the sun come up over the lake was magical, as I found the whole of the Galilee area. Taking Holy Communion slowly drifting in



Beth Torkington travels half-way around the world - and home again - for this month's

The Diary



Time travel

Number 1 son is off travelling, this time around South America and suggested I meet him in Peru so we could go and visit Macchu Picchu together. So I did. It might mean money and yellow fever injections with painful after-effects but it was worth it. I get copy for the diary ('at last', I hear you cry), the chance to torment the congregations for months with sermon illustrations that begin 'when I was in Peru' and watch their faces crumple. And how often do middle-aged women get offered adventures?

So I have been to Peru and it was mind-blowing. Macchu Picchu, a 'lost' Inca city built on top of a vertiginous mountain is a world heritage site and really is one of the wonders of the world. Beautiful, mysterious, eerie (human sacrifice was carried out here) breath-taking (literally as well, you are at quite an altitude). Yet the experience that I keep remembering was twenty hours travelling by train across the high Andean plain. It felt as remote as it sounds and yet there were always people to be seen, the area is intensively farmed. And it was like travelling back in time because the way of life has not really changed for over four hundred years. Families still live in small compounds formed with mud bricks, side by side with their animals. The land is ploughed either by hand, with an Inca hand plough, or by oxen, harvested with scythes - and yet seemingly endless miles are intensively cultivated.



And where the land is too high to grow crops, flocks of llamas and alpacas graze. Women in traditional dress (full skirts, knitted leggings, lots of layers of knitted jumpers, all topped off with a trilby hat), constantly spin or knit with one hand and usually have a baby in a blanket on their backs. And up there, feeling like the middle of nowhere, there are still large towns with thriving markets spread out on blankets on the ground, small booths offering haircuts or tarot card readings. Not a car to be seen, just lots of bicycles and rickshaws. But despite their remoteness and their poverty all these towns had Internet Cafes, not for the tourists (the trains go very slowly but don't stop and there is no real tourist provision), but for the local population - and they were crowded. What I wondered would these people make of the rest of the world that they met through this medium - and was I seeing the last generation to live this traditional life-style? Suddenly all my O Level history learning about agricultural and industrial revolutions took on a different dimension.

Living with change

Then it was time to time travel back through Lima, Miami and Heathrow airports and return home, back to church life and the grim reality of November and the Western District Conference. Sorry about that last sentence ... being with my brothers and sisters from the district is of course lovely but we do, if we are honest, have to face some grim realities. In our own way we are also living through a cultural revolution and the place of church in our national life has changed utterly. The congregation reports bring us face to face with this reality. In many ways the District Conference seems to me to be no longer needed in the way it once was; modern communications mean that much of the news we hear is already old news. The challenge is to find ways of using these times of coming together to wrestle with the realities and to encourage each other to find imaginative ways forward despite our weakness.

If you'll let me indulge myself and winge for a while, travelling backwards and forwards between Leominster and Brockweir has been horrible and time-consuming these last few weeks. Forestry work and a small landslide having closed the main A road along the Wye for three weeks I have had to take to the hills and every journey has been dominated by either severe frosts, snow, fog or torrential rain. I suddenly realised, on single width roads in the fog without them, how vital white lines are to keep you on the straight and narrow.

Being there in the future

In true pious minister mode I would ask you what the white lines are in your life, keeping you on the straight and narrow! However these long journeys have made me reflect on our style of ministry. Given the fact that there are not enough ministers to go around I don't see how else we do it but long-distance ministry has its real problems - and not just with the weather. Anglican theological colleges now seem to emphasise a ministry of presence and encourage their clergy to be highly visible in their local communities. People like this approach; the winner of a recent poll to find 'the nation's favourite vicar', was the vicar who "goes to everything in the village". That kind of ministry is impossible if you are covering different places and yet in this job it is important to get alongside people and to be available for them. So it was with a heavy heart I read Br. McOwat's letter on Church Service Sunday. One or two ministers to each district would change our way of working completely. I note the government is trying to do their best for the Moravian ministry by raising the retirement age to 68. Call me uncommitted but that just made my heart sink even more! But with few ministers are we to become a post-modern network church, just keeping in touch with fellow Moravians, or can we find another way? We really need to pray for vision!

Have you heard about...

Some ideas seem so simple and obvious that I kick myself that I've never thought of them for myself. This month's suggestion falls into this category.

Many church premises are used for children's activities including 'parents and tots' groups. I recently heard of a Baptist church in Coventry that has a small library of up-to-date children's books of bible stories and prayers for their parents and tots' group. Parents are happy to borrow these for their children when perhaps

they wouldn't go out and buy them - and talking about the books sometimes opens up conversations about belief and prayer. It is important that the books are relatively new and attractive, and chosen with the exact age-range in mind. Therefore perhaps a small collection that is regularly updated is the best way to start but this seems to me a very simple idea that could help to make more of the opportunity of hosting children's groups.

Beth Torkington

Shallowford

Fellowship Weekends

A weekend not to be missed!

Theme: Vision

11th - 12th Feb and 5th - 7th May 2006

Please book early as accommodation is limited!

Booking Forms available from your minister or contact

Paul Greenhough Tel: 01274 872633

E mail: paul.greenhough@moravian.org.uk

From Paul Gubi, a hymn suitable for New Year and Anniversaries

Hymn of the Month

*Lord, for the years Your love has kept and guided,
Urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
Sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.*

Mission Praise 428.

For New Year and Epiphany - the presentation of Christ to the nations - here is a hymn which has certainly climbed the charts in popular enjoyment. It is the work of two Anglican bishops, Timothy Dudley-Smith (formerly of Norwich) who wrote the words, and Michael Baughan (formerly of Chester) who gave us the tune. Its great popularity is very understandable. The words speak to us and for us, and there is no difficulty in identifying with them. The tune, written for this hymn, is very singable, making it a combined offering that uplifts the soul in worship.

It lends itself to those occasions when we mark a turning of the page - anniversaries, new year - times when we ponder questions like "What keeps us going?" or "How did we get here?" It is not difficult to feel a shared spirituality with our fellow-worshippers. The acknowledgement of God's love leads us readily to thanksgiving.

*Lord, for that word, the word of life that fires us,
Speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive Your people's praise.*

Our most common inspiration is God's word which may come to us through Holy Scripture, or through God's gift to others of preaching or teaching that brings the word alive and sets us on fire with enthusiasm for the Faith.

*Lord, for our land in this our generation,
Spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
For young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.
Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt You,
Loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
Hungry and helpless, lost indeed without You:
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.*

Christ is alive for this day and generation. There is an interesting phrase here. It speaks of being "Oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care". These are probably the most sought after objectives of the majority of people and as such they do not fit the common perception of being oppressed. The oppression is of the spirit - a blighting of that lightness and spiritual *joie de vivre* in the preceding verse that speaks of being set on fire. Here is an echo of the parable of the sower where the cares of worldly wealth spring up and stifle the growth of the seed. It is a tilt against the hedonistic and materialist values that dominate our society and lead to the spiritual emptiness that becomes evident and leaves us adrift: loveless, comfortless, hungry, helpless, lost.

Having prayed in this way for our country and the world, the final verse brings us to the conclusion that there is a way out of this. It is ourselves, remade in the living power of God, the power that enables us, in the footsteps of Christ, to tread the path of self-sacrifice, in the freedom of God's forgiveness (past put behind us) and the commitment to the Lordship of Christ; letting the living Christ be recognized in us.

*Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us -
Self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
Past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.*

After that, any other New Year resolution seems superfluous!

Around the District Conferences

Western District

The 2005 Autumn Conference was held at Brockweir on 5th November. The opening devotions were led by Br. Dennis Monger. I suppose this Conference should be considered to be our one of business for the year, for we had the reports from its executives, its congregations, and P.E.C. to consider plus the elections and then to plan for the coming year, but it also gave us a time for fellowship, friendship renewal and refreshment. The annual reports from the eight Congregations, having been circulated before the Conference, gave us time to look in depth at where we have been during the year. They showed how each is working in different ways to do Christ's work in the community in which they live. Some are the only Church in the village, others in urban areas and part of a larger ecumenical group.

These reports also point towards where, with God's help, we can look ahead to the future with the changes and challenges happening around us, for which we may not always care. Sometimes our Christian business appears to lie dormant and then a small flame shows, then hopefully bringing with it a bigger flame. One example is Malmesbury. Its small elderly congregation, having looked at where their strengths were, now have an ecumenical monthly Prayer and Bible study Group, not duplicating what is already happening in this small country town but bringing together people from all denominations who like a more traditional approach to their Christian fellowship. Their comfortable building is also a preferred meeting place for Malmesbury Churches Together,

The Abbey Guild, Lenten Study Groups and the Justice for Peace Group.

One area where the flame has been rather low in the District and is now beginning to glow more brightly was demonstrated when Br. Peter Gubi was able to tell us of the District's Lay Training Course now having five participants with another two hoping to join in the New Year. Because of the distance between participants it is partly a correspondence course but the plan is that a meeting should be arranged every six weeks.

Another 'flame' was the September District 'Quiet Day', much appreciated by those who were able to attend and it was agreed that another should be planned, perhaps also with one for children.

The Bath Weston and Coronation Avenue congregations are now in a period of interregnum and the members there have taken on the responsibilities for the smooth running of the work for an unknown length of time without a Minister.

Following this year's Spring Conference when the afternoon session was given over to a 'Back to the Future Forum', where we identified qualities we most admire about our church and the challenges that beset us. We went away with much to think about and with resolutions for future action. Looking ahead to Spring Conference on March 4th 2006 at Kingswood, the afternoon session will be a time of reflection, discussion and prayer.

Beth Plumb

Irish District

The Autumn meeting of IDC was held on Saturday, 22 October at Gracehill. Sr Jan Mullin was attending IDC for the first time and was present in the dual-role of PEC representative and as the newly arrived Minister of the host Congregation.

The visit by a small contingent of the Königsfeld band to the District had taken place earlier in the month. They had performed at a gathering at Gracehill on the Saturday, had attended worship with their hosts in their respective Congregations on the Sunday morning, and they and we had been well pleased with the visit. Br Buchholz brought a word of thanks on behalf of the visitors.

The Chairman, Br. D. Woods, read a letter of appreciation that he had received from the Provincial Youth and Children's Officer for contributions to Summer Camp and Moravian funds. Sr Mullin reported on behalf of PEC and responded to questions raised and comments made. Grave concern had been expressed, within the District, regarding the encroachment of certain so called 'charismatic groups', which appear to be exploiting our Moravian heritage to their own advantage and it was felt that such inappropriate use of the same might damage our own reputation. Sr Mullin stated that PEC was aware of these concerns and was monitoring the situation.

Br Broadbent presented a summary of the Congregation annual reports and some discussion ensued. Appreciation had been expressed in all of the reports regarding the contribution made by Lay Preachers and the retired Ministers in the maintenance of services. The Chairman wondered if we had become overly dependant upon these when hardly a week passes by when the services of one or the other is not required. This is not helped, he said, when Congregations within a unit hold their services concurrently and it thereby

becomes impossible for the shared Minister to attend both. Br Holdsworth reported that this had been looked into but regrettably there had been no movement.

Br Holdsworth reported on Youth matters and this was supplemented by a report (Br Broadbent) on developments regarding Child Protection.

'Binge Drinking' has become a serious problem within our society and this was highlighted in Sr Hoey's Social Responsibility report. It was agreed that we must do all that we are able to inform all young people who come under our influence of the dangers of this anti-social behaviour.

Sr Kitson reported on her attendance at both the Provincial Renewal Weekend, at Shallowford in May, and the Renewal Secretaries' Day in June. The District Renewal Committee has arranged a District Fellowship Day to be held in November. The facilitator is to be Br Mark Kernohan, and the programme will follow that adopted for the Shallowford Weekend, i.e. 'The Touching Place'. A Brethren's Breakfast has been arranged for Saturday, 7 January 2006.

Other reports included that from the Irish Council of Churches, presented by Br Woods. Sr Roberta Thompson reported on the ICC Women's Link both as the Moravian representative on the national committee and the body's newly appointed President.

Sr Woods brought Conference up to date on Christian Aid while Br Woods reported that the C of I/Moravian contact group continues to meet, albeit sporadically, and the ministers reported on contacts between their own Congregations and neighbouring Churches, which also tended to be sporadic and of a low key nature.

Consideration was given to the 2007 celebrations for our Church's 550th Anniversary and to the possibilities of a Lay Training Course being held at an early date.

L Broadbent

Correction

Br. David Bunney, St. Luke's United Church, Bedford, would like to clarify the reference to the relationship between St. Luke's and St. Peter's Church of England in last month's District Conference Report. The actual text of his report to Conference was as follows:

"The brief that I was shown of the position I now hold at St. Luke's included the hope of closer ecumenical links with the parish church of St. Peter.Barely a month into my pastorate the Rector announced his resignation from the parish, to take up a new living elsewhere. This was quite a blow to many. The process of selecting a new Rector soon got under way; candidates were shortlisted and interviewed in late June. The decision was made not to make an appointment from those invited. The process was not restarted until September....If an appointment is made, one hopes the new incumbent may be in place in time for Lent. This has been disappointing in many ways. The vacancy which I filled had already lasted a year and a half, and the vacancy at St. Peter's followed on so soon. It has meant no real progress in this situation over a period of almost three years. I was given 4_ years to address the question; one year has gone without any progress being possible."

Br. Bunney adds that there is an excellent relationship between the two churches. The slow progress has been caused only by the juxtaposition of the two vacancies.

Historical Magazine

Sr. Edna Cooper has just published a further edition of the Historical Magazine, telling the story of the early days of work among Caribbean Moravians in Britain. The story is told mainly in first person accounts from people involved, many of them having been gathered by the late Br. Robelto Bruce. Copies may be obtained from Sr. Edna Cooper, 6 Farmley Gardens, Glengormley, Newtown Abbey, Co. Antrim BT36 7TU price £1.25 (postage included.)



Herrnhut Guest House and Conference Centre

Sr. Annegret Scholz, chairperson of the Provincial Board of the European Continental Province has sent information about the newly refurbished Moravian Guest House and Conference Centre at Herrnhut. The Conference Centre has beds for 50 guests and the Guest House for 37. All rooms have modern facilities and some have wheel-chair access. The Conference Hall can seat 160 people and there are a number of

smaller meeting rooms and a play room for children. Guests have access to a large garden and there are lots of recreational facilities on the premises and nearby. A special invitation is given to brothers and sisters from the British Province.

Further information from Tagungs- und Erholungsheim, Comeniusstrasse 8 - 10, 02747 Herrnhut, Germany. Web: www.teh-herrnhut.de

Homelessness Sunday

"Build happiness, stop homelessness": that's the call of Homelessness Sunday, January 29th, the annual opportunity to remember in worship the problems of people pushed to the margins and to re-dedicate the work of Churches and other organisations on their behalf.



In the Gospel for the day (Mark 1, 21-28, Jesus brought a man whose behaviour was clearly anti-social into the community; he reached out to one from whom others recoiled. We are asked to use Homelessness Sunday to explore how we can do the same. Further information: www.homelessness-sunday.org.uk or from Housing Justice, 209 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5QT

Unitas Estates' Co. Ltd.

Applications are invited for the tenancy of two newly constructed semi-detached houses, 11b and 11c Fairfield Square, Droylsden, Manchester.

11b comprises lounge with built in gas fire, kitchen/dining room with access to garden, hallway, cloakroom with WC and basin, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with bath and shower, WC, full gas central heating and garden adjoining house. Rent will be in the region of £1400 per quarter (£467 per calendar month)

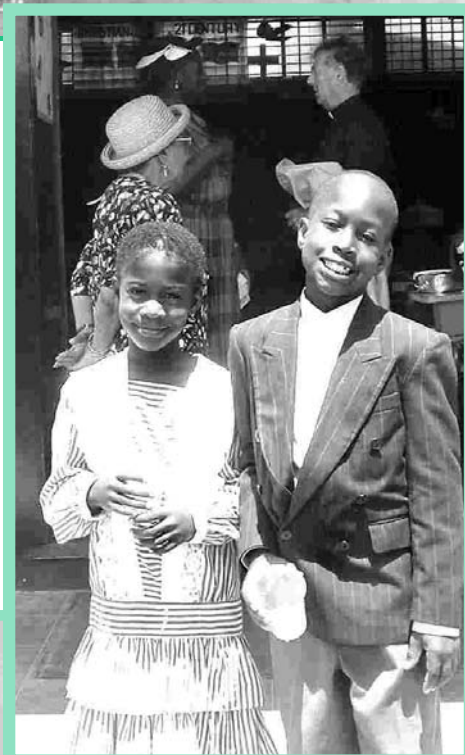
11c comprises lounge with built

in gas fire, kitchen/dining room with access to small courtyard, hallway, cloakroom with WC and basin, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with bath and shower, WC, full gas central heating and garden adjacent to garden of no. 11b. Rent will be in the region of £1350 per quarter (£450 per calendar month)

Viewing may be arranged with Mr. D. S. Ellwood, 8 Fairfield Square, Droylsden, Manchester M43 6AD Application forms can be obtained from Mr. J. Forrester, 19/21 Chapel Brow, Leyland, Preston PR25 3NH

Continuing our occasional series on congregations in other Provinces, we take a look at Trinity Moravian Church, Jamaica, which this month celebrates 50 years of service.

Fifty Years On



Trinity was opened and dedicated on January 18th, 1956, with the then Governor, Sir Hugh Foot, Prime Minister Norman Manley, Bishop Kneale and Br. Ben Muncaster all taking part. The first Sunday service was held on the following Sunday.

Richmond Park, in Kingston, was a newly developed housing area, made up largely of professional and business people but the church was strategically placed near the border between Richmond Park and less prosperous areas. Church members came from all the neighbouring areas so that the congregation provided a meeting point for people from different social and economic groupings who might not otherwise have met.



The new congregation was established as part of the celebrations for the 200th Anniversary of Moravian work in Jamaica (1954). Br. S. U. Hastings was called to oversee the project and the foundation stone was laid on December 9th. The land on which the church was built belonged to a prominent Roman Catholic family, one of whose members, Sam Carter, later became R.C. Bishop of Jamaica.

While the church was being built, services were held in a nearby home so that when the church was opened, communicant membership was already 61, rising to over 400 by 1966, with large numbers of young people and children in Sunday School and youth organisations. Current membership is somewhat smaller but is still over 300.

congregation faithfully, but from the very beginning, the strength of the congregation has been in the large number of faithful and highly competent members who have given leadership in the various areas of congregation life. Without a capable Board of Stewards (Committee) and the Board of Elders, who assist in the pastoral care of the congregation, ministering effectively to a congregation such as Trinity would be near impossible.

In more recent years, in addition to the regular worship, the work among young people and with women's and men's groups, two of the main outreach services offered by the congregation are a Skills Training Centre, where students learn about clothes making and food preparation, and a weekly feeding programme catering for around 40 needy people. Fifty years on, Trinity continues to witness and serve.

(Compiled from material supplied by Easton Boyne and Marion McCreath)

Br. Hasting's ministry at Trinity continued until 1964 when the office of P.E.C. President, which he occupied along with his congregation ministry, became a full-time one. He had also been elected Bishop in 1961. Br. Fred Linyard succeeded him, serving also as Moravian tutor at the United Theological College of the West Indies until he and the family returned to the British Province in 1973. The present minister is Br. Trevor Dawkins with Sr. Marion McCreath as Supplementary Minister. In the years between, a number of brethren have served the

Congregation News

CONGREGATION REGISTERS

INFANT BAPTISM		
August 7th	Freya Barrett Parkin	Salem
August 28th	Kaitlin Jade Dunne	Salem
September 18th	James Taylor-Fox	Salem
October 23rd	Ellen Rose Schofield	Weston, Bath
	Mia Pobloth	University Road
RECEPTIONS		
November 20th	Arthur Marsland & Jennifer Marsland	Salem
MARRIAGE		
September 24th	Rebecca Gaunt to Wayne Bolton	Fulneck
December 23rd	Clare Connolly to Andrew James	University Road
DEATHS		
August 1st	Doris Barrett, 80 years	Salem
August 12th	Thelma Brook	Fulneck
August 17th	Agnes Gallacher	University Road
August 31st	Amy Rhodes, 81 years	Salem
September 19th	Elsie Scott	University Road
October 27th	Eunice Harrison	Fulneck
November 3rd	Eddie Cooper, 76 years (Brother of Bishop Joe)	Weston, Bath
November 11th	Richard Brook	Fulneck
November 22nd	Maurice Nicholas, 89 years	Weston, Bath

Fulneck, Pudsey

The congregation was sad to hear that Br. Dickinson had been granted sick leave due to his continuing ill health. Our thoughts and prayers are with Br. & Sr. Dickinson and their family at this time. The Junior Church recommenced after the summer break. Unfortunately Sr. Dickinson feels unable to continue with her work with the Junior Church at this difficult time. We thank her most sincerely for all the work with the children in previous years and pray that new leaders will come forward from the congregation.

Sr. Hilary Smith conducted her first Sunday morning service on Sunday 11th September to a good congregation. After the service a coffee morning was held in the Boys' Brigade Building to welcome Sr. Smith and give her the opportunity to meet people she may not already know. Building on Sr. Hilary's children's address on "Building Bridges" the members of the Junior Church introduced themselves to members of the congregation they had not previously met.

Sr. Hilary conducted her first Married Choir Festival at Fulneck on Sunday. This was a very special occasion, attended by both married couples and those who had been widowed, in which we remembered the happy times shared with our partners and gave thanks.

Once again Heritage Open Day was a huge success with many strangers becoming aware of Fulneck and its history for the first time. Sadly we have to report the death of Sr. Eunice Harrison, who with a small group of dedicated workers set up and ran the museum for many years. She was a lifelong member of this congregation, serving the church as long as she was able and will be sadly missed by her many friends. Sister Margaret Connor is now our Archive Supervisor, a title officially acknowledging her work over many years.

We also have to report the sad loss of two members of the same family. Sr. Thelma Brook and her son Br. Richard Brook died within a few weeks of each other, bringing to an end a long family tradition of service to the Fulneck Congregation.

Ros Davey

FROM CHURCH HOUSE (continues on back page)

Synod 2006

It has already been announced that the Provincial Synod will be held at Swanwick from 17-20 July 06. Deputies and ministers are asked to ensure that the Provincial Board has the name and address of each deputy by the end of March 06.

50% of all places on Synod Committees will be up for election and so nominations are sought for those places. Nomination forms will be sent out in the New Year and they should be

completed and returned to Church House by Friday 26 May 06.

Proposals affecting the constitution (the Book of Order) are to be received at Church House by Thursday 13 April 06.

Proposals that do not affect the constitution, reports and memorials are to be received at Church House by Friday 26 May 06.

The Synod mailing will be sent out from Church House on Friday 23 June 06.

Property to let

Unitas has the following property to let at Fulneck:

A terraced cottage with 2 double bedrooms, living room and kitchen/diner. Gas central heating. Rent c.£1,150.00 per quarter. All enquiries to John Forrester, First floor, 19/21 Chapel Brow, Leyland, Preston PR25 3NH. Tel: 01772 421566; e-mail:

Closing date 20 January 06

FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Provincial Presentation

During January and early February, the PEC and members of the Finance Committee will be travelling round the Province to talk about the way in which the church works and how it might need to change for the future. Please make every effort to attend the meetings in your area so that you will be more fully informed about the needs of the Province.

Bookroom

The bookroom now has in stock copies of Sr Kay Ward's latest book *'Heading Home'*. This is a second collection of short meditations and costs £8.00 plus postage & packing.

Provincial Diary for January

Monday 9th Provincial Board, Unitas Estates' Co Ltd. & BMB meetings - the PEC²
Tuesday 10th the above meetings continue ²
Wednesday 11th Provincial presentation in the Western District²
Thursday 12th Hymnbook revision sub-committee meets ² ² ² ²
- Br Bob Hopcroft & Sr Jackie Morten²
Saturday 14th Provincial presentation in the Western District²
Sunday 15th Opening & dedication of Lecture Hall, Ockbrook - Br Terry Cross
Sunday 15 - Tuesday 17th Provincial presentation in the Yorkshire District
Monday 23 - Tuesday 24th Provincial presentation in the Lancashire District²
Thursday 26th Provincial presentation at University Road²
Friday 27th Provincial presentation at Gracehill²
Tuesday 24th Renewal Committee meets at Lower Wyke
Saturday 28 - Sunday 29th Pastoral visit to the Ballinderry congregation ² ² ²
- Sr Jackie Morten²
Sunday 29th Provincial presentation in the Eastern District - north²
Wednesday 1st Provincial presentation in the Eastern District - north²
Sunday 5th Provincial presentation in Bedford

PRAYER NOTES

Our times are in your hands O Lord

Read St John Ch 1 v 1-5
In the beginning was the word and the word was with God.

Our times are in your hands O Lord, our steps are well ordered, thus do we pray to be faithful servants all through this year, ones who honour and serve the Lord of hosts.

E. Lee Philips

With Praises and Thanksgiving

With praises and thanksgiving we enter this new year; our heavenly Father's leading has brought us safely here. The journey set before us is through an unknown land; but we shall fear no evil when guided by his hand.

Like Abram, called to journey in lands he did not know, so in this strange new country, this new year we must go. New scenes are spread before us, new vict'ries to be won; and like an ancient father, in faith we travel on.

The days are swiftly passing, time is not ours to hold. The new year we are greeting will soon become the old. But he who guides us onward will grant us in his love, when earthly years are ended, that bright new year above.

Douglas LeTell Rights.

Let us pray.

Loving God,

at the turn of another year,

and the start of another chapter in the life of your church,

we come to you,

seeking your guidance

and committing ourselves once again to your service.

Take what we are

and direct what we shall be.

We come to share with you and one another,

to offer our thanks and confession,

to bring you our hopes and fears for the future,

and to learn more of your purpose for our lives.

Take what we are,

and direct what we shall be.

Help us to make the most of the days ahead -

to use them to the full,

enjoying each one,

celebrating your many blessings,

and bringing honour to you through the way we live.

Take what we are

and direct what we shall be.

Help us to make time for you -

to read your word,

offer our prayers,

seek your will

and respond to your calling.

Take what we are

and direct what we shall be.

Loving God,

We come to you at the start of another year.

Speak to us now,

and help us to hear your voice.

Lead us,

and help us to see your hand.

Teach us,

and help us to know your will.

Send us out,

and help us to walk by faith,

in the knowledge that, as you have been with us

in the years gone by,

so you will continue to guide and bless us

in the days ahead.

Through Christ our Lord..

Amen

THE MORAVIAN MESSENGER

Official Journal of the Moravian Church in the British Province. Published monthly by the authority of the Provincial Synod. Advertisements and all communications concerning distribution and supply should be sent to the Moravian Book Room, 5 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TJ, and NOT to the Editor.



Editor: Fred Linyard. Contributions for the Messenger should reach the Editor, 6 Yew Tree Avenue, Ockbrook, Derby DE72 3TB. Telephone/Fax: 01332 679643. E-mail: fred.linyard@moravian.org.uk by the 3rd day of the preceeding month.