

Moravian messenger



The making of a bishop!

It's official: Hornsey Moravian Church has elastic walls - it's the only way so many people could have been packed into it for the consecration as Bishop of the Unity of Br Joachim Kreusel on 29 November.

There were had ecumenical guests, local clergy as well as a large complement of our own ministers, both serving and retired. Joachim's friends and family were well represented, having travelled from Sweden, the Netherlands as well as Germany. There were also dozens of Moravians from Yorkshire as well as the Midlands, the Eastern and the Western Districts and, of course, the Hornsey congregation.



Br John McOwat conducted the proceedings and was supported by two brother bishops from the European Continental Province: Br Friedrich Waas from Germany and Br Volker Schulz from Switzerland. Although unable to attend, our own Sr Beth Torkington sent greetings.

The congregation singing made the rafters shake and there were songs from the Hornsey choir, musical dance from



the Hornsey Sunday School and a Moravian anthem 'It is a precious thing' by Johann Friedrich Peter (1746-1813) beautifully sung by Olive Murray (soprano) and Alison Crookendale (mezzo-soprano) and accompanied by Chris

Foreman (organ).

In his address, Br Bob Hopcroft opined that it is often easier to see qualities in others that we fail to see in ourselves but that God sees not only what we are but also what we can become. We have no doubt that Br Joachim not only has the humility and qualities needed for a bishop but that, under God's guidance, he will continue to develop and grow as a servant bishop.



Following the formal consecration, the congregation adjourned to the church hall where they were royally fed and watered. The steel band played, greetings given and tributes paid. A cake had been made with a replica of the photo of Br Joachim that appears on the front of a church leaflet, showing him carrying a child he has just baptised around the church introducing him to the congregation.

So many people had given their time and talents to host this provincial event and their efforts were well rewarded - it was indeed and on so many levels, a wonderful day.

We know that Br Joachim will be a valued addition to the bishops' bench and a real blessing to the Unity.

Jackie Morton

photo credit: Karin Lindmark.



The Moravians and the Inuit of Labrador: the Early Years

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Spotlight on Gomersal

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The Lay Preachers' Training Weekend

The bi-annual Lay Preachers' Training Weekend was held at the Northern College in Manchester. Sr. Gillian Taylor and Sr. Kathryn Woolford were the leaders, with help from Br. James Woolford and Br. Peter Gubi. There were four Lay Preachers from Northern Ireland, six from Yorkshire, one from the Western District and one from the Midlands District.

The theme was 'Sermons with a difference' and Br. Woolford introduced us to the use of monologues. He challenged us to retell a story based on the thoughts and views of different characters in the bible. James shared with us his interpretation of the thoughts and observations of the Centurion who was present in the last days of the life of Jesus. He saw the scourging and the crucifixion of Christ and concluded 'He really was the Son of God!'

Each member of the group picked a character and attempted to write a monologue as if they were that individual. The time scale was short but the results were outstanding, with the characters used including Ishmael, Mrs Noah, Doubting Thomas, the lepers outside the gates of Samaria, and the Angel Gabriel.

Br. Peter Gubi, in his thought provoking session on Pastoral Visiting, emphasised the importance of listening. To listen in love is one of the greatest gifts that one person can give to another. Listening can liberate the spirit and can enter the intimacy and fragility of another's world. Listening is vital and transforming. And a poem Peter shared with us concluded, 'So please just listen and hear me and, if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and I will listen to you'.

In an open session, Sr. Gillian reminded us that the Moravian Lay Preachers' Study Course had been revised. So, if anyone feels the call to serve as a Lay Preacher, please contact your minister.

What a joy it was to share stories with each other, and a glass of wine (or two), at the end of each day! And we were privileged to join in Sr. Eunice Hoey's birthday celebrations. The fellowship we shared was uplifting, and we returned to our congregations refreshed in mind and spirit. Here's to the Lay Preachers' Training Weekend in 2016!

The editor writes:

Thank you to everyone who has sent me material for the Messenger. It is much appreciated. Here are some general guidelines to help me include as much and as varied material as possible.

Congregational News is ideally up to 250 words in length, with two relevant photos. Please start your email with a greeting that gives my name, or it might get spammed!

Articles. Every issue is intended to include something on youth; overseas work; social responsibility; theology and spirituality; art and history. There is also the 'Face to Faith' column in which people talk from a personal perspective; and the 'Spotlight' series which covers the history and current work of a congregation. If you can contribute, please do write.

Book and film reviews. These are welcome. Include the full title, author's name, date and place of publishing or release.

Some guidelines to help editing

Please submit in Word (any version) or Open Office. The normal length for a full-page article is approximately 900 words. Shorter articles are welcome. Use U.K. spellings, punctuation and grammar.

Photographs are welcomed, but please make sure you have the owner's permission and have checked if you have parental permission to use photos of those under eighteen.

Give dates in this format: 01 August 2014. Give titles of books etc. in italics. Give the title and sub-titles in bold and in sentence case (not capitals). For quotes use single inverted commas 'like this'. Give numerals under 10 in words (six, seven etc).

Thank you and enjoy writing!

Can I love my Christian faith while respecting the faith traditions of others?



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£123 per person

Please register with Paul Greenhough

On 01274 872633 or at

paulgreenhough150@btinternet.com

Latest news from the Provincial Youth and Children's Office



Joy's Journal

Meetings, we all have to go to them at some time or the other, some are boring, some are interesting, some teach us new things, at others we share our knowledge, some are decision making, and others you can be passive in. I seem to have been to few this month and thought you might like to know about the variety.

The month began with the Christian New Media Conference, a place to find out what the latest trends are, how to use technology in the church and for mission and to hear about how others are using it. The most interesting session was about how art can be used to encourage reflections on faith and life, the art in question being photographs distributed through Twitter, or gathered in a project using digital cameras.

I also met with the PEC this month to look at some of my work, especially safeguarding. Together we also came up with a Provincial Safeguarding Policy for use at national events. PEC are also asking Districts to adopt this for district events.

CGMC - Consultative Group for Ministry amongst Children - is a group of national children's workers and representatives of organisations working in ministry with children. Each conference has a different topic. This time we were looking at who we are,

why we exist and where we should be going, because after 40 years it was felt we need to review the role CGMC plays in the wider ministry of the church as well as ministry to children and their families. The importance of this group to those who attend was re-emphasised as well as a complete overhaul of the aims of the group.

PYCC met this month and I'm sure many of would like to know what we talk about. The September meeting - well it was a bit delayed this year - was hosted by Eastern district in Church House. This is usually a meeting for reflection on summer camp and looking forward to summer camp the next year with selection of a venue, dates and the leaders for camp. It is fair to say there was quite a bit of discussion, especially with selection of camp leaders. Other topics were international events, various reports, plans for a joint PYCC/YMPA project, and proposed youth workers for districts. PYCC works very hard and finished about 5pm so the day is very intense for those attending.

So although I attend a fair number of meetings they vary enormously, as does my role in them.

Joy Raynor

Summer camp 2015

Ages 10-17 (on 31st August 2015)

25th July to 1st August at the Frontier Centre, Northamptonshire. Cost £260 with £30 discount for early booking. Limited places this year so book early to secure your place. Forms available from your minister, Joy Raynor, or on line at www.moravian.org.uk

Moravial 2015

Ages 18-26

10th-18th August in Berlin. To apply send an email to joy.raynor@aol.com stating why you would like to go. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet with young Moravians from across Europe. Cost isn't yet know but I expect it to be less than £200. Flights are paid for by the church. Priority will be given to those who have not been to an international event but please apply even if you have been as there may still be space for you.

Noticeboard Jan 2015

Br Derrick Purnell:

phone number in Daily Watchwords should be 01234 215846

Feeding Britain:

A strategy for zero hunger in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the United Kingdom is a report on hunger, its causes and the foodbanks so many of our congregations support. For the 46-page text and comments, see Praxis December 2014, <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/feeding-Britain>



Moravian Men's Fellowship

Date for your Diaries and Church Calendars

FELLOWSHIP DAY 2015

Fairfield Moravian Church, Manchester on Saturday 27th June

The MEN'S FELLOWSHIP have produced as part of the Fund Raising a new MORAVIAN CAR STICKER @ £1 each.

If you can sell some in your congregation then please contact Rev. Kenneth Evans.

There is also a range of Lamb & Flag Jewellery, Badges etc. as well as the Men's Fellowship ties available for sale.

Ecumenism - failures and futures?

In late January every year we have the national Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, an event which has been going in some form for over a hundred years. Most of us think ecumenism is a good thing and right for churches to engage in, but it often comes with a sense of weariness. We might be among a dwindling group who will go to a united service - but it might be with a sense of duty not desire.

The early twenty-first century has seen a decline in the energy and funding in the ecumenical movement. Yet, people across the churches are working together more closely than ever, especially in local, volunteer-led, social activities. What has happened and what can we learn for the growth of the kingdom and the service of society?

The background

The movement was originally Protestant but in the mid-twentieth century Catholics, whom formed the largest Christian body internationally, engaged, which led to profound sharing of insights, liturgical practices and hymnody.

It was thought that Church unity was both possible and desirable, a means of living out Christ's prayer that all may be one. In Britain it was thought that most churches would find energy by worshipping together, by creating new structures and passing round information. An agreement made in Porvoo, Finland, in 1992 declared that in future the churches would not do alone what they could do together.

Already networks had been established in Britain to administer the new ecumenical intentions, and national bodies, such as Churches Together in England and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland developed as meeting places for church leaders and their nominees. Conferences and worship events had become popular, but it was by the 1990s clear that they were touching a relatively small number of church-goers, and not

attracting non-church-goers. One of the original problems was that the ecumenical movement was limited in worship through being afraid to hurt feelings: this has much improved. It also took a lot of running - and by the 1980's women who had raised children were returning to the workplace rather than engaging in unpaid church administration as had been the unspoken expectation.

Nevertheless, in areas like new-build estates a church functions well if it is there from the start, engages with local community groups and has the backing of traditional denominational structures and funding. All of this requires a certain amount of administration, as well as good communications networks, which take time to establish and maintain.

It became clear during the 1980s that visible Church unity was not going to happen. This was in part because of theological differences but more because of a lack of interest. Indeed the Catholic Church hierarchy (but not necessarily the membership) reverted to its traditional relationships of polite distance with the Protestant denominations and focussed its energy on 'high-level' contact with the Orthodox churches. Few denominations were willing to give up their traditional forms in favour of collaborative relationships that needed to take account of equal authority whatever the size of the church. The independent churches, mainly evangelical in persuasion, showed little interest in the movement, concentrating instead on loose international networks, especially in the English-speaking world; while the black-majority churches had too few full-time staff, too little influence outside their own small group of congregations. The Porvoo Agreement has proved cumbersome and has never achieved general recognition.

Those involved in creating an active ecumenical movement usually saw the work as part of a means by which to

spread Christ's Gospel across the nations. They entered it with courage, confronting old wounds and divisions, between themselves and the churches they held dear. But many also assumed that all church attenders had experienced the wounds, or held the denomination dear. People come to church for a variety of reasons, and spiritual development before God may not require them to experience in person the wounds of fellow-journeys. The ecumenical movement was never fully mainstream.

In one area, Northern Ireland, it was at best on the fringes of social and political discourse during the Troubles, though highly committed individuals may have played key, and often un-noticed, roles in bringing peace.

Ecumenism is often thought to have run out of steam. It may be seen as an extra structure on church life, rather than an enabler.

So, what has gone right?

Sometimes, members of a specific church do what churches have traditionally done well - seeing a gap in provision to people in need and trying and fill it. This could be something like a food-bank, or the provision of a building for community activities, something that needs local experience to be of use. Starting a new project needs allies, and church people seek allies from other churches. They will very probably not regard themselves as 'doing' ecumenism, but a 'lead' church with the active acquiescence of the others, of often works well - as long as it is not trying to reinvent what already exists.

Another positive development has been the tendency to share or 'borrow' church buildings, on a regular or occasional basis.

Another area might yield fruitful results. The very public response to historic child abuse and its cover-up rebounded across the denominations. Churches are now perceived through this experience, and this must mean that there will have to

be more cooperation, less dependence on power, and a more healthy expectation of being accountable.

There is also the growth of 'intentional communities' In most cases these provide an alternative area for the practice of Christian faith, and may be suited to people 'falling off the edge' of congregational life, though organisations like the Iona Community are premised on having a home church, and require members to engage with local meetings..

Much of what we have today would have been impossible without the ecumenical movement of the 1970's and since. If ordinary church members see themselves as natural allies of each other in serving the poor and those who cry out for justice, this seems a Spirit-filled end.

From the point of view of having worked in this world, the most important aspect of the is to be a bridge. Bridges get walked on. But to see real development and respect given to the churches can be energising. Civic work, communications networks and such-like can be a huge blessing far beyond our expectations.

In summary

Looking back we see how the movement took 'that they may be one' to mean a merging of existing theologies and forms of worship. Instead, a different kind of grass-roots ecumenism has emerged, which responds to practical need. This may be the starting place for future common worship and thought.

The absence of visible unity may not be a problem, when seen on the light of cooperation and complementarity. We usually find a way to pray together but are less clear on how this should be transformed into action or public witness. What is clear is that for this generation, ecumenism usually it comes from the grass-roots, from local knowledge and local desire to serve.

Rosemary Power

Remembering War

In January each year we mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Acting together may take much courage.

The Lübeck Martyrs

In the 1940s in Lübeck, a city in northern Germany, there lived four remarkable clergymen. The three Roman Catholic chaplains Johannes Prassek (1911-43), Eduard Müller (1911-43) and Hermann Lange (1912-43) and the Evangelical-lutheran pastor Karl Friedrich Stellbrink (1894-1943).

It was the time of the Third Reich, the period when the Government of Germany was in the hands of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Germany was transformed into a state which controlled nearly all aspects of life. Racism, especially anti-semitism, was a main feature of the regime. Jews, Roma and others considered undesirable were persecuted or murdered. There was a program of systematic murder of the physically and mentally handicapped (National Euthanasia Program).

In these difficult times the four clergymen were friends. This friendship was unusual because the denominational boundaries were then very clearly defined. The four were united in taking a public stance against the crimes of the Nazi regime. The four encouraged people to critically question the acts of the regime.

The Nazis didn't tolerate criticism. Political opponents often were imprisoned, tortured or executed. But the clergymen were convinced: We must obey God rather than humans (Acts 5,29).

On Palm Sunday 1942, after a night when Lübeck had been the target of Allied bombing raids, Stellbrink said in his sermon: God has spoken with mighty words. The citizens of Lübeck will learn to pray again.

Between April and June 1942 all four clergymen were imprisoned. They were held under very harsh conditions and were nearly starved to death. The three Catholics were visited in the prison by



the Bishop of Osnabrück, Wilhem Berning, who in vain wrote a plea for clemency. Pastor Stellbrink on the other hand received no help from his church and was dismissed from service after his trial.

The trial against the four clergymen was held in June 1943. The verdict was clear from the beginning. The clergymen were found guilty of high treason, subversion of national defence, broadcasting crimes and aiding the enemy. They were condemned to death and executed by guillotine on 10th November 1943, with less than 3 minutes between each of them, at a prison in Hamburg.

On the 25th of June 2011 the Catholic chaplains were beatified [the first stage towards being declared a saint], with the commemoration applying to all four.

The persecution and suffering of the three Catholics and the Lutheran pastor in my opinion is an example for the ecumenism of the martyrs under the cross of Jesus Christ. To remain with Christ and to share in His sufferings in this world led them

to be connected in prayer and care. Johannes Prassek wrote the title page of his bible: Who can force the one, able to die? All four men were willing to die for what they were convinced was doing God's will. Thus the Lübeck Martyrs show us that the more we come closer to Jesus, we will see in one another sisters and brothers, called together. What we share and which binds us together, is even stronger than what separates us.

Bettina Lumm-Hoffmann

The write is a Catholic and a retired judge

The Moravians and the Inuit of Labrador: the Early Years



The Eskimos are considered extremely savage, intractable, ferocious and cruel; they flee at the sight of Europeans and kill them whenever they are able." So reported a French official in 1715 of the Inuit inhabiting the coast of Labrador. An initial friendly overture from the Inuit was followed by a sudden and ferocious attack. The first Moravians contacting the Inuit in 1752 suffered such a fate. After a friendly welcome and an amicable barter trade the bodies of seven missionaries were found murdered.

But the French official quoted above added that the behaviour probably arose because the Inuit had been maltreated, fired on or killed by Europeans. The same explanation was accepted some 50 years later by Sir Hugh Palliser, governor of Labrador, when Moravians decided on a second mission among the Inuit.

The mission station at Nain dates from 1771. The Moravians were given an area of 12 square miles for their own use. They realised that their work would only succeed if the Inuit could be separated from the corrupting influence of other Europeans. All trading would be through the Moravians and this would support the station.

The first 30 years of the mission were hard going.

The Inuit spiritual beliefs reflected their hunting way of life. The main spirit, Torngak, took the form of a giant polar bear who lived in a cave along the northern coast. His aged wife, Superkugsak, lived at the bottom of the sea. Both were difficult characters and required much placating if hunting was to be successful. The intermediary between hunter and spirit was the priestly figure of the shaman or angakok.

The missionaries had to destroy these beliefs if Christianity was to succeed. This proved difficult. For the missionaries, it must have seemed incredible that beliefs which caused such anxiety and fear to the Inuit and the demands of often unscrupulous and cunning angakok should be preferred to a loving God. But the life of the Inuit in that hard land centred on hunting if he was not to starve. "Will Jesus provide us with a whale? Why did I catch fewer seals than last year although I prayed to Jesus?" The missionaries struggled to find a response that would satisfy. The Inuit knew from the angakok that if Torngak had not given

them a whale it was because a taboo had been broken. The hard way of life of the hunter had led to a preference for food in the hand over a general benevolence and a promise of eternal life.

The ways of the Inuit caused friction with the missionaries. Unlike agriculturalists, the Inuit hunter could not be relied on to store food for hard times. He would rely on the mission in times of shortage and the food received from mission could be the same food he had traded in a time of plenty. This struck the careful missionaries as improvident.

And the Inuit considered food and clothing as the right of everyone. You give what you have as you never know when you will need aid in return in such a climate. Again, the missionaries found these expectations a source of frustration.

Trading is not part of the natural Inuit lifestyle, and although it had already existed before the Moravians arrived, they turned it into a full part of settlement life. Christianity itself was seen by the Inuit as a trading product - "I will become a Christian in return for a knife".

Death, being too common an occurrence, was not feared - only the ghosts of the dead. Sin was interpreted as a criticism of the Inuit way of life. Missionary reports such as the following can be found as late as 1870: "The Eskimos are not in the habit of regarding seasons of want and hardship in the more serious light of the voice of the Lord speaking to them, but content themselves with the reflection that similar occurrences have happened before".

Even where Inuit had been converted (most likely to happen in times of food shortages) they would continue to revert to the angakok in times of stress or illness. As a result the missionaries could never be certain of a true conversion.

Despite their natural conservatism the Inuit were greatly attached to European products. The Moravians traded only in goods they considered necessary for the Inuit. Attractive knick-knacks and -disastrously- alcohol could only be obtained from traders in the south. So south they would go. In 1784 200 to 300 Inuit sold their goods to outside traders and the ship from England returned all but empty. The mission could not survive many such years. Hunting required the

Inuit to move outside the mission boundaries and once outside those limits they regressed to their old ways. Return journeys from the south brought back diseases to which the Inuit had no resistance and these would sweep through the stations.

The Inuit's love of partying was another source of friction. They would set aside a hut for dancing, singing and sex (to which the Inuit had a very matter-of-fact attitude) and objections from the missionaries were met with "Doesn't Jesus want us to enjoy ourselves?"

Ernest Hawkes, a specialist on the Labrador Inuit, tells us in his 1916 study that the Inuit treat everything as a joke and have a hearty dislike of a sour face. Reading some of the exchanges between the Inuit and the missionaries one does wonder if there is not a degree of teasing going on.

It is worth pondering the life of the missionaries and their wives. The work was a lifetime's commitment, spent in an inhospitable climate in a dangerous land, sharing periods of want with the Inuit, quite possibly never again seeing one's home or even one's children after they had been sent away for schooling. Wives were chosen by the church and sent out. Several missionaries in Labrador spent over 30 years in the station. It is hardly surprising that the annual visit of the ship was looked forward to. Despite their patience one can imagine the distress at having to acknowledge, by the late 1700s, that there were merely a handful of genuine converts.

But Palliser had hoped that the Moravians would civilise the natives and so they did. The alternative could well have been the use of arms. It is generally agreed the Moravians, by a gentle induction of the Inuit to a modern way of life, saved them from early extinction. And conversion of a people can be a slow progress. A generation of schooling and gradual adaption to the missionaries' ways resulted in a marked increase of converts in the early 1800s.

Adrian Wilsdon

(with thanks to Lorraine Parsons, Archivist)



Spotlight on Gomersal Moravian Church

In 1742, in the early days of Moravianism in England, a German preacher travelled to Yorkshire. He had almost reached his destination when, overtaken by the night, he fell down the shaft of a surface coal pit on Hartshead moor. Fortunately, he was discovered the next morning by a local collier. Upon hearing a noise, the miner called down into the darkness, only to be startled by the marvellous reply, "Is this the way to Gomersal?" - the only words of English the visitor had learnt!

As the oldest church in the village, Gomersal has a long and interesting history. Even before the church had been built, there was a large open-air Lovefeast in a nearby field. It is said that everyone attending brought what food they could and placed it on a large white cloth on the ground. A verse was sung and a sermon given. Stewards then distributed the "feast" equally among the worshippers, with devotions lasting for four hours.

Gomersal was one of the societies run by the Yorkshire Congregation and was settled as a congregation in its own right in 1755, the chapel foundation stone having been laid in 1751. It was here that Count Zinzendorf gave his first sermon in English, in 1754. In 1758 girls' and boys' day schools were established, the first educational facilities in the area, almost 100 years before a state school. A single sisters' house was also founded, and in 1793 a girls' boarding school was built on one side of the chapel, and the manse on the other. Additional buildings were built onto the back of the church with connecting doors. A girls' Sunday School was started in 1816 and a boys' Sunday School followed in 1820, although it wasn't until 1866 that there was a dedicated Sunday School building. Between 1866 and 1869 the church was remodelled into its present format, raised to two stories with a gallery added, the pulpit moved to the south side and the pews placed length-wise instead of breadth-wise. It was also at this time that our historic organ was installed, which is still in use today. The sisters' house and schools were closed in the latter half of the 19th century and the additional buildings were converted into houses.

The church is now a Grade 2 listed building. It was extensively repaired and modernised between 2005 and 2009, revealing for a brief period some of the original pre-1860s features and architecture. Most of the fixed pews were removed and replaced with chairs, and we also installed a lovely new kitchen and a disabled toilet. The restored church offers greater flexibility for services, and for hosting meetings and events for the community,



yet it has lost none of its character. We were greatly helped by grants from English Heritage, but also raised much of the building fund money ourselves.

Being at the heart of Shirley country, we have many connections with the Brontes, and are rediscovering many 'forgotten' secrets. Joshua Taylor (portrayed as 'Matthew Yorke' in Charlotte's novel) and his descendants were members of our congregation. They made lasting contributions to the redesign of the church and organ in the 1860s. This has led to links being forged with the local Red House Museum and Oakwell Hall ('Briarmains' and 'Fieldhead' respectively). In September we held our first Heritage Open Day when we were connected to these historic houses by a vintage bus, which brought many first-time visitors here.

We have a close relationship with Little Gomersal Community Association and hold occasional joint events. This year we've worked together on a project to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. The result was a detailed travelling display for local residents, which was launched with great success in the church in August and remained here until recently, before going on a tour of the other

churches and schools in Gomersal. We have also produced an eBook called 'The Great War Minister's Diary'. It recalls the history of our chapel during the war, as recorded by the minister W.G. Stooke, and is available as a free download from our web page at <http://tinyurl.com/visitgmc>. Our research reminded us of the challenges faced by the congregation of the day; structural damage caused by explosions; the fear of attack from Zeppelin air-raids; a growing list of restrictions and disruptions to services; integrating displaced refugees from Belgium; and the misery and heartache of human suffering and loss, tempered only through the love of fellowship. We give thanks in our prayers for our blessings today.

Although it is in the past that we have our roots, it is in the present that we are building a future.

The congregation is friendly and welcoming, with a wide range of ages. We begin our family worship together on Sunday mornings at 10.30am and then part way through the service members of our Junior Church go to their age related activities. When the service has finished we all join together again to share refreshments and fellowship in the church. We hold our Lovefeast and Holy Communion service on the second Sunday

Spotlight on Gomersal Moravian Church continued

of each month at 3pm. We enjoy each other's company, worshipping and working together, and having fun at our frequent social and fund raising events. We try to have a mix of activities that are suitable for all ages together. Members are kept up to date with what's happening through our monthly newsletter, run jointly with Fulneck (which can also be downloaded from our web page <http://tinyurl.com/visitgmc>).

We have a number of regular groups. The Prayer Group meets every Thursday to pray for the congregation, the local community and the wider world. The M.W.A. meets on the second Wednesday of the month. The Ladies Fellowship meets on the first Wednesday of the month, and has a wide range of speakers and activities. We have occasional joint Messy Churches with the Fulneck congregation, and our joint Youth Group meets monthly. The 'Hands of Faith' puppet group is a popular and entertaining attraction for young and old alike. Usually on the third Wednesday of the month, Wellbeing Wednesday is held in church. This includes a short themed walk, refreshments and yoga, with proceeds going to charity. It is a popular community activity for church members and non-members alike, and recently celebrated its second anniversary. Since June we have also held a monthly Julian Meeting, where a reading or piece of music leads into a time of silent, contemplative prayer. Cup of Hope coffee mornings follow the Julian Meetings, serving Fairtrade tea and coffee and home-made cakes. Our Church Hall is often in demand for keep fit classes and other activities. During the summer months we also open the Church on Fridays for visitors. From our regular outreach meetings we have several exciting ideas and projects to take into next year. We are also members of Churches Together in Gomersal, Birkenshaw and East Bierley, who organise ecumenical services, prayer days, lent courses and Scripture Union Re:wind sessions for the local primary schools at Christmas and Easter.

For a smaller congregation we have lots going on! So, the next time you are in the Yorkshire District, call in for a chat and a 'Cup of Hope'. You could even search for our geocache. Just remember to ask, "Is this the way to Gomersal?"

Chris Shorten and Michael Newman

Annual District Conferences

Western District Autumn Conference

Conference met at Kingswood on 01 November

Br. David Howarth was welcomed as the PEC representative. Br. Philip Ashton, in his Chairman's Report told us that the collection of the District's Summer Rally had raised £162.40. This had been divided between Medecins Sans Frontiers and the DEC Gaza Crisis Appeal.

Ministerial provision in the Western District was discussed, for at present there are no full-time serving Moravian ministers. Br. Ashton thanked the retired ministers for providing services and for their diligence and assistance in enabling the district to continue to function. Br. Howarth emphasised that the predicament that the district finds itself in is constantly being discussed by PEC but noted that there is a shortage of serving ministers. All congregations expressed the view that the current situation cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. Day to day running of the churches is continuing but provision of pastoral care was highlighted as a particular difficulty.

Sr. Sue Groves, the Social Responsibility

Secretary reported that the Committee held their last meeting on 5th April 2014 at Ockbrook. Most of the meeting was concerned with discussions about housing and Food Banks and the very real issue of poverty, not just in our communities, but also within our congregations.

The Provincial Youth Report was also presented by Sr. Groves and she reported that the structure of PYCC had also changed. Summer Camp numbers were down this year but feedback from camp was very positive. It was noted that there weren't any attendees from the Western or Eastern Districts.

The congregation reports were presented and each one had something positive to report but all lamented the lack of a full-time minister.

The Cup of Covenant was led by Sr. Windmill.

Judith Ashton

Midland District Conference

Met on 18 October at Ockbrook

Apologies were given that there were no representatives from the Leominster and Leicester congregations. A welcome was given to Sr Gillian Taylor PEC and also to Sr Jane Dixon.

The elections for the forthcoming year:

Chairman Br Mark Dixon
Secretary Br Colin McIlwaine
Youth Representative Br Mark Dixon

Messenger
Correspondence Br Victor Launder

A financial report was given that they had not spent any of the funds during

the past year.

Sr Taylor gave us the Provincial Report.

Mission Board News of our work in South Asia was given to us.

Br Mark Dixon gave his report on the Youth of the Church and mentioned the Summer Camp at Fulneck which was held at the end of July.

A Youth Weekend is being planned in Hornsey for November 14 - 16.

Next Conference will be held on March 7 2015 at Hall Green United Community Church, Birmingham.

Victor Launder

Eastern District Conference

Held on Saturday 18th October 2014

Br Joachim Kreusel welcomed everyone with a special welcome given to Br David Howarth (PEC) and then led the opening devotions.

The Provincial report was distributed and presented by Br David Howarth. The key points included: Nominations required for the new Provincial committees

- Diaspora Secretaries Br Mark Kernohan and Sr Lynsey Kernohan
- The New works grant is still available - examples given of current requests
- The music addition of the hymn book is now available.

Lay Training session. EDC have started the Lay Training course and are currently on unit 3. A suggestion was made to put the course on line and have an on line tutor.

REPORTS

Queens Park (Bedford) the congregation has eight members and six adherents. Our oldest member Br Williams died in the past year. We have run several activities from a fun day, musical evening and fellowship meal to name a few. Br Derrick Purnell was ordained in September 2014.

Harold Road two services each month are led by the lay preachers, to whom we are more grateful. Numbers at services are variable partly due to the housebound members. Financially the congregation is finding things difficult.

Fetter Lane There is always a good attendance at the Holy Communion service which is held on 1st Sunday of the month at 3pm. The MWA lead a service each month. A youth forum was held in November 2013 to focus on youth work. Our Church anniversary service was led by Br Trevor Auty. Bible study group is held twice a month on Monday.

Harlesden the membership is 100. The communion service on the first Sunday each month is well attended.

The Sunday School remains active and the children and young people take part in the service before leaving for their own session. A laying on of hands service was held during the year. Two members of the congregation completed the United Reformed Church TLS training course and will be inducted as Lay Preacher soon. The friendship club continues on Fridays. They share games, knit, sing and much more.

Hornsey the membership remains at 102 members. Operation Christmas Child was well supported. The Christingle service also used Skype to interact with two of our young members who were in America. A laying on of hands service was held in January. On 12 February Hornsey opened its doors to the 'All people All Places Winter Night Shelter'. The Sound of Brass from Germany performed in April during the service and afterwards. The Green Castle Classical guitar duo performed for us in May.

Stoke Newington the Stoke Newington Society is in a similar place to last year. We are looking at the way forward. The original aim was to give the people of Stoke Newington a spiritual home, when traveling was difficult in the 60s. The numbers have declined at present but, the commitment of those who attend is high.

A letter from Br Alan Holdsworth was read - noting he would like to be nominated for the Mission and Society committee.

A Letter from Joy Raynor who is offering safeguarding training for the Church Committee or Elders. Following discussions it was agreed to seek two sessions (one in Bedford and one in London) for EDC Churches.

The meeting closed with the Cup of Covenant and the grace led by Br. Edwin Quildan.

Edwin Quildan

Congregation News

Royton

How quickly time flies! The Christmas services were well attended, especially the Christingle service when so many friends and relatives help to fill the church and there is always so much fellowship and love.

Royton joined with the other churches in the annual Walk of Witness on Whit-Sunday, helped along by Brass Bands. 'The Royton Churches Together' organised a 'Heart Training Session' where people received training in heart resuscitation. We shared in an 'Around the Churches Treasure Hunt' where we opened our church for a child-friendly quest about things to be found in each of the churches and we also hosted the annual 'Favourite Hymn' service.

The M.W.A. attended the Away Day at Baildon. A Bible Study Group has studied with Br. Cooper, "Essential 100" a journey through the Bible in 100 readings, which was much enjoyed and appreciated.

Sister's Sunday...Harvest...Anniversary services have all been well attended and have meant so much to everyone. The Service in August when we commemorated the beginning of the First World War was especially moving. Thirteen young men from Westwood (as it then was) gave their lives.

Br Cooper celebrated the 25th Anniversary of his ordination in July and Br. and Sr. Cooper celebrated their 30th Wedding Anniversary on August 4th, with two lovely cakes made by Sr. E. Hipwell.

Sadly we have had to say goodbye to Philip and Janet as they move to Fairfield. We shall miss them, we have grown to love them very much. When times have been sad he has been there with his support and he has joined in our happiness. Philip has always had the help and support of Janet and his family, Ben, Hannah and Josh. Janet has for many years been a leader in the Sunday School and Ben, Hannah and Josh are so much a part of our Church Family. They take our grateful thanks for all their love and support and sincere wishes for God's Blessing in their new ministry at Fairfield.

We do welcome Br. and Sr. Dixon and we look forward to Jane's ministry here at Royton.

Annie Geary

Congregation News

Lower Wyke

On Sunday 23rd. November, being Church Service Sunday, the congregation at Lower Wyke took the opportunity to hold a Service of Thanksgiving for Br. Paul Greenhough who has played the organ at the church for over 60 years.



Former members, family friends and representatives from the other churches in Wyke joined the congregation which enjoyed hymns specially chosen by Paul for the occasion. At a buffet lunch served after the service, Paul explained the reasons for his selection of hymns and how they had influenced his life.

Br. James Woolford in his address, based on the reading from Matthew Chapt. 25 vs 14-30 -The Parable of the Three Servants- referred to the special musical talent of Paul which he had used over the years to enrich the quality of the weekly services.

His love of music began at an early age through his father and lessons with a local piano teacher and continued when taking over the duties as organist of the congregation as a teenager, following the retirement of the previous organist. Paul has been the organist continually, apart from a break of two years when he was completing his National Service.

Over the last few years he has been assisted by Srs. Janet Thorpe and Sheila Mallinson.

In addition to his contribution on the organ, Paul has served the congregation as a Sunday School Teacher, Member of the Church Committee and Church Steward. For the Province, Paul has been the Y.P.M.A Secretary for many years and served on other Committees.

In the words of Br. James - "Truly a Brother using his talents in the Service of God".

Peter Walker

Fairfield

At the time of writing plans are well in hand for the Christmas Tree Festival on the 6th and 7th of December and then of course we have all the special services to look forward to. We at Fairfield will celebrate Christmas and with our new Minister Rev Phil Cooper. We wish them a happy and fulfilling time here at Fairfield.

Rev Graham Kent left us in the summer to take up duties again for the Methodist church and in the meantime the church committee have done a sterling job of keeping things running smoothly and we appreciate greatly the visitors who have taken services during this period.

We had a very well attended Heritage weekend in September; an amazingly profitable jumble sale in October (£600 raised); our annual Congregation Council Meeting also in October (the shortest I can ever remember attending; an Autumn

Fair on 8th November raised over £1300.

This year two members of the Wednesday Fellowship have celebrated their 100 birthday. Sr Beth Oxley is the last remaining founder member of the Wednesday Fellowship. Friends and family attended her celebrations.

Sr Cecelia Leigh was presented with a card and floral arrangement to celebrate her birthday at the last Fellowship meeting - the group has closed due to dwindling numbers. We still see Sr Leigh in church on a regular basis thanks to Sr Rosemary and Br Peter Pass who kindly collect her on their way to church. Sr Rosemary is the daughter of Sr Beth Oxley and Rosemary and Peter have recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Margery Sutcliffe

Horton

We welcomed Br Richard Ingham to lead our church anniversary service in March. . During Lent our minister led studies on 'Signs in John's Gospel' A quiz night and supper was held in March, and a sale at 'Shipley Market' in April. Little Tommy John was christened and welcomed. The Sisters' Festival was held in May and we enjoyed Sr Jane Hutchins as our main speaker. Afternoon tea was served on 06 September. Harvest Festival was on 21 September led by Sr Katherine Woolford. Other events were MWA coffee

mornings, the Tuesday Women's Fellowship with a wide variety of speakers, and a Bible Study.

We were saddened by the death of Sr Winifred Chappell, and our church was full on 10 September as we gathered to remember a dear sister and friend. We send love and prayers to her family.

Jamie Spencer

Gomersal

This year has seen many different types of fundraising. In addition to the usual coffee mornings, events have ranged from an Irish Night, that included a quiz and a sing-along with Bro. James Woolford, to an Ascot Ladies Day, with all the ladies in their finest dresses and BIG hats, cheering their horses along (wooden ones of course).

We continue to hold monthly meetings of the Ladies Fellowship, Well Being Wednesday, Cup of Hope coffee mornings and Julian meetings, all of which are attended by people who don't otherwise come to Church.

Our English Heritage grant requires that we open Church each Friday from April to October each year. We have had a number of visitors who have signed the visitor book and left encouraging remarks. This year we have combined the opening, in conjunction with the Little Gomersal Community Group, with a Gomersal and the Great War exhibition, which will tour other churches and schools over the next 4 years.

Fulneck

After the excitement of the first half of the year, including Fulneck's appearance on the Easter edition of 'Songs of Praise', we have had a busy autumn.

The Museum opened as usual every Wednesday and Saturday from Easter to the end of October with visitors coming from near and far. Pupils from Fulneck School were brought along to learn a bit about the church's history, plus children from other local schools. On Wednesdays there were also afternoon teas which made £1,250 this year. We also have tours of the church and settlement. Thanks to Sr Rosalind Davey who organises the tours, and to all our volunteers.

Heritage Open Day was a very busy time and thanks go to Sr Myra Dickinson for all the time and work she and other members of the church put in. The theme this year was the First World War and there was a splendid display of artefacts, photographs and letters of men and women connected with Fulneck Church and settlement who were lost, injured or survived the war.

Now we are thinking about Christmas. Our Christmas Fair was on 15th November. The Yorkshire District Choir are

Salem

During the summer we had problems with the gas heating system in church and had to have the whole system replaced. Fortunately we managed to get it done before winter set in.

We had a successful Reunion Service at the end of September, which one again coincided with a baptism, and so it was good to see the church really full.

We have unfortunately decided to discontinue Messy Church as we have been unable to get any children from the immediate area to come, and the grandchildren who have been coming for the last two years are dwindling, for one reason or another. At the last service in October

Sunday, 14th September was Heritage Open Day and for the first time we took part in this national event. Besides the WW1 display, we had information on the history of our Church, a childrens quiz and activity corner. Bro Simon Dunn gave 2 organ recitals and a historical walk and talk was given by Bro Chris Shorten. Refreshments were available and slides of the recent renovations to church were shown. It was estimated that over 100 visitors came through our doors. Transport by a vintage bus service operated between Church, Red House Museum (that has connections to both our Church and the Bronte's) and Oakwell Hall.

Following her 2 year placement with ourselves and Fulneck, we are sorry to say goodbye to Jane and Mark Dixon, who are heading over to Lancashire where Jane is taking up her first ministry. We wish them both well for the future.

Norma Machell



rehearsing for the Choral Festival to be held at Wellhouse on Advent Sunday, and we have a performance of Handel's Messiah by St Peter's Singers on 5th December. It won't be long before we start making our Christingles.

We hope you all have a wonderful time this Christmas and enjoy all the services when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Sr Molly Lythe

we only had two children, although the adults enjoyed themselves and the lunch.

The dance group that used our hall on a Saturday has now stopped operating, so we will have more opportunity to use the hall in future. The pre-school using the building Monday to Friday has expanded to do all afternoons and is very busy.

The annual congregation lunch took place on 27 October, when we were able to say goodbye to Br Philip Cooper after his call to Fairfield. Many thanks again go to Sr Chris Coutts for organising this event.

Anne Broadbent

Congregational Register

Baptism Fulneck Edward James Dickinson (born 14/08/14) Baptism 23/11/14

THE GREATEST LOVE

Greater love can none imagine
than God's love for all mankind;
love for us, so undeserving,
greater love can no one find.

Praise to God who ever loves us
with the love that saves from death!
Christ victorious, reigning o'er us,
fill us with your Spirit's breath.

Come, great God, Divine
Compassion,
purify each longing heart;
with your grace our livers refashion;
faith and hope and love impart.

Music: 'The Servant Song'
or 'Stuttgart'

Words: Paul Gubi, 2001

Dates to remember

Week of
Prayer for
Christian
Unity



Holocaust
Memorial Day

Poverty and Homelessness
Action Week



Prayer Notes

January 4th [Second Sunday after Christmas]

John 1: (1-9) 10-18

Heavenly Father, who through the Apostle John has revealed to us the mystery of the Word made flesh, born among us, that at last we may see him face to face. Keep us steadfast in the faith that the Son of God has come and that, believing in him, we may have life through his name. The true light from heaven has shone in our darkness and we have no more no more need of light from lamp or sun, in the fullness of your eternal glory in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

January 6th [Epiphany]

Matthew 2:1-12

Eternal God, who by the shining of a star guided the wise men from the east to worship your Son, born to be King of all. Show us your heavenly light and give us grace to follow and be led by it the whole way until we find him and, finding him, rejoice. As they presented gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh, may we now for our treasure, give ourselves and all that we have, bringing him the offering of a loving heart, an adoring spirit and an obedient will; for his honour and for your glory. A living sacrifice acceptable in your sight; through him who for our sakes was born on earth as a little child, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

January 11th [First Sunday after Epiphany]

Mark 1:4-11

Almighty and everlasting God, high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity and whose name is holy. At the baptism of your blessed Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan you manifested your glorious Godhead when the heavens were opened and the Spirit descended on him like a dove. Lift our eyes above the narrow horizons of this present world that we may behold the things eternal in the heavens and may the glory of your Beloved Son shine in our hearts and be revealed in our lives. Amen

January 18th [Second Sunday after Epiphany]

John 1:43-51

Son of Man, before the brightness of whose presence the angels veil their faces, yet who in love stooped to redeem us, being subject to Mary and Joseph; sharing at Nazareth the life of an earthly home. Send down your blessing, upon our families today that they might be a reflection of the Holy Family of Nazareth. May your promised presence be with us and at your coming may you find in us a dwelling prepared for you, Jesus of Nazareth, who came to take our nature that you might bring many sons and daughters to glory. Amen

January 25th [Third Sunday after Epiphany]

Mark 1:14-20

Lord Jesus, who after John's arrest came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God. Make us so to follow your teaching and holy life that we may truly repent and believe and know for ourselves that the Kingdom of God is at hand. As Simon Peter and Andrew his brother, at your call, immediately left their nets to become fishers of men; give your grace to all whom you call today. May they hear your voice and gladly obey so that, led by your love, they may labour to share your saving gospel with all mankind, for the spread of your kingdom and the glory of your name. Amen

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