

# Fulneck Moravian Church Magazine

July 2023



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## Minister's Letter

This month marks quite the milestone for me personally. It will be 10 years since I received and accepted my first call in ministry and this month and next I will be using this space to reflect on the changes, the challenges and high points of this chapter in my life. It will probably be my most introspective letter so far so please allow my indulgence but milestones like this do tend to put you in a reflective mood. In so many ways, a lot has changed and in many ways a number of things have stayed the same. But first, let's start at the very beginning (it's a very good place to start).

For me, going into ministry was always something I felt I was called to do. I remember my first time leading a service. It was at Ballinderry Church in Northern Ireland, and it was a youth service, so they decided to ask a young person to put it together and lead it. I felt at home delivering a service that included a magic trick. Yes, my very first service included a magic trick. Mark that up as one thing that hasn't changed. This beginning is one of the reasons I see the importance of encouraging and enabling people in the church to do things, especially children and young people. Ministers have never had a place of overall power in the Moravian tradition, and we operate a priesthood of all believers which means an acceptance that we **all** have gifts from God and we **all** have a calling to serve God in whatever way we are equipped to do so.

For me, ministry was something I planned to do later in life and so it was something I kept pushing

to back of my mind. That was until I heard my call to serve God during the ordination service of Br Michael Newman.

Sr Beth Torkington was talking about the challenges the church was going to face and I felt God pushing and calling saying, "why are you waiting to do later what I need you to do now". Following that service, I put in my letter of application and then 5 years afterwards (I had just missed the deadline to start college that year so had to wait a year before starting my training) took my first call. I saw a quote on Facebook this week that said, "Someone, somewhere, is depending on you to do what God has called you to do". The challenge within that though is recognising what God has called you to do and then, from my own experience, enabling others to see that within you.

One of the proudest moments in my ministry came last year during our provincial Synod. It was a powerful double whammy of agreeing the statement of inclusion, followed by the passing of the proposal to allow the blessing of same sex marriages in our churches. The most important part of our Moravian ethos is the acceptance of each other's differences and the knowledge that we are all one in Christ. But that brings me to the biggest challenge I've had to face.

**In Essentials: Unity; In Non-Essentials: Liberty; In All Things: Love**

I am not what most people think of when they think of a minister. I have throughout my life, in whatever setting I've found myself to be in, struggled to fit in. I often describe myself as a square peg. And yet, despite the church's understanding and apparent acceptance of our differences, I still feel the pressure of fitting in to a model of minister that doesn't match with who I am, the skills I have, the weaknesses I carry or even my innate theology. It has been, and continues to be, something of a battle. People often see me as a very confident person and that is because I'm, at heart, a performer. I always aim to please the crowd and put on a mask of confidence that all performers rely upon. The truth, the real me, is someone who struggles with his mental health, who lacks self confidence and struggles almost daily with the desire for true acceptance.

The truth, the real me, is someone who struggles with his mental health, who lacks self confidence and struggles almost daily with the desire for true acceptance. I remember speaking to Sr Betsy Miller who is a minister in the USA and was present at the Synod last year. She spoke to me privately and the content of what she said will remain largely private. But she had noticed the difficulties I have fitting in and how awkward I can be. She said, "embrace the fact that you are a square peg." And I'm trying but really, the church should be able to have the flexibility to have many holes that fit all types of pegs.

As I have already written, I believe we all have skills and gifts given from God and as much as I can see that in others, seeing it in myself has always been that bit harder. But, over the last 10 years I've gained an awareness of what I am good at as well as what I am not good at. There are skills I know I have and can bring to the church and there are things where I need more help and people to support me and to support the church as well. If we truly mean the words that are in our statement of inclusion, then that must surely apply to our ministers as well.

Next month I will be focusing more on looking forward, but I will say here that the church needs to adapt and change in order to face the future and to be standing and indeed thriving for years to come.

Therefore, I'm going to finish by asking you a question. I'm not going to answer it for you and nor is there a right or wrong answer, but it is something for you to think about over this month. Is our church a more inclusive place following the acceptance of our statement of inclusion?

Remember the words of the apostle James, "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead." James 2:26

## Fulneck News and Notices

### Organ Recital: Tuesday 18 July at 19.30



Thanks to the Leeds year of Culture 2023 we're able to take part in the Fuse Festival, in Pudsey, by hosting an organ recital. Thanks to funding we're able to offer this prestigious event for free.

We're delighted that Dr Gordan Stewart will be our organist for the evening, and the programme contains well loved classics such as Fugue in G minor by Johann Sebastian Bach and Sonata 3 (First movement) by Felix Mendelssohn. Refreshments will be available after the recital for which we ask for a donation.

Although there is no charge for this event it would be helpful to know how many will be attending. You can reserve your place via the event posted on our Facebook page or speak to Sr Allison. Also we will be needing some help on the evening stewarding and serving refreshments so please let Sr Allison know if you can help.

Many thanks.

## UNITY PRAYER WEEK: Wednesday 5 July

Fulneck has been asked to cover Wednesday 5 July. The list for volunteering is in the Bell Room, so please sign up so that our allotted hours are fully covered.

If you are a real early bird then you may choose to start at 4.30 in the morning; the final hour for Fulneck is 22.30 (10.30pm). In the Bell Room there are also guidance notes available.

### HOLY HABITS

Missional discipleship as  
a way of life.

### Holy Habits

**They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.** Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and **had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.** Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and **ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God** and having the goodwill of all the people. **And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.** Acts 2: 42-47

As the title Holy Habits implies the intention of following the series is to help these to become instinctive both to us as individuals and to the church community. This takes time and in some cases practice. Sr Gloria has joined our Holy Habits Team and will be more involved in the journey from now on. We started with the habit of prayer and then biblical teaching. This month I'm offering a variety of prayers for you to use to help you on your spiritual journey as prayer is the bedrock of our faith.

Dear Father God

We ask that you will help us to learn more about you through the Bible. May you guide us through life with the knowledge and understanding from your teachings as we learn about you from Jesus' parables. Please help us to grow closer to you by focussing on your ways as Jesus taught.

Amen

Collect for Bible Sunday in The Methodist Worship Book.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scripture to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, read, mark and inwardly digest them, that through your patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life which you have given us. In our saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Dear God

Our world which you have provided is imperfect- your kindness ignored, your creatures being persecuted. As a community we are sorry for our many blemishes: as a church, we are sorry we ignore your Bible, which is so wise and so easy to forget. Though we will probably be a bad citizen again, we ask for your forgiveness and admit our sins. Sorry.

Amen

To finish I offer you this traditional gaelic blessing.

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rainfall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.



## **FULNECK HERITAGE OPEN DAY**

### **WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?**

**Love ... Life ... Labour in the early Fulneck community.**

**Saturday 16 September: 10.30-16.00**

**Free entry**

This year there is an opportunity to explore how early members of the community lived together. The exhibition will show how the settlement grew, what work people did and how they lived together. The exhibition and museum will be full of interesting artefacts. The exhibition will also show how the history of the school is a vital part of the growth of Fulneck.

In addition to the exhibition and museum, there will be tours of the settlement, activities for children and refreshments.

As we hope to welcome many visitors to this wonderful settlement, help will be needed in all areas. Please let Sr Myra know how you can help.

Thank you

### **VIA EXULANTIS – the refugee road**

In preparation for the Fulneck Heritage Open Day (Saturday 16 September) I have been researching the history of the Moravian Church. I started by looking back to how early members of Unitas Fratrum, Christian David and others, left Moravia to escape persecution and moved to Herrnhut. I discovered that today there is a pilgrim way that follows the route, called the Via Exulantis.

On their Facebook Group I have read a few comments that I thought I would share with you. Please accept that the Group is Czech and so I rely on Google to translate for me. Hence in some places I have had to make changes, hopefully correctly.

The Group starts with a statement about how the Via Exulantis began when five young men decided to escape the persecution they faced for their faith. It goes on to describe how these young men prayed for help along the way.

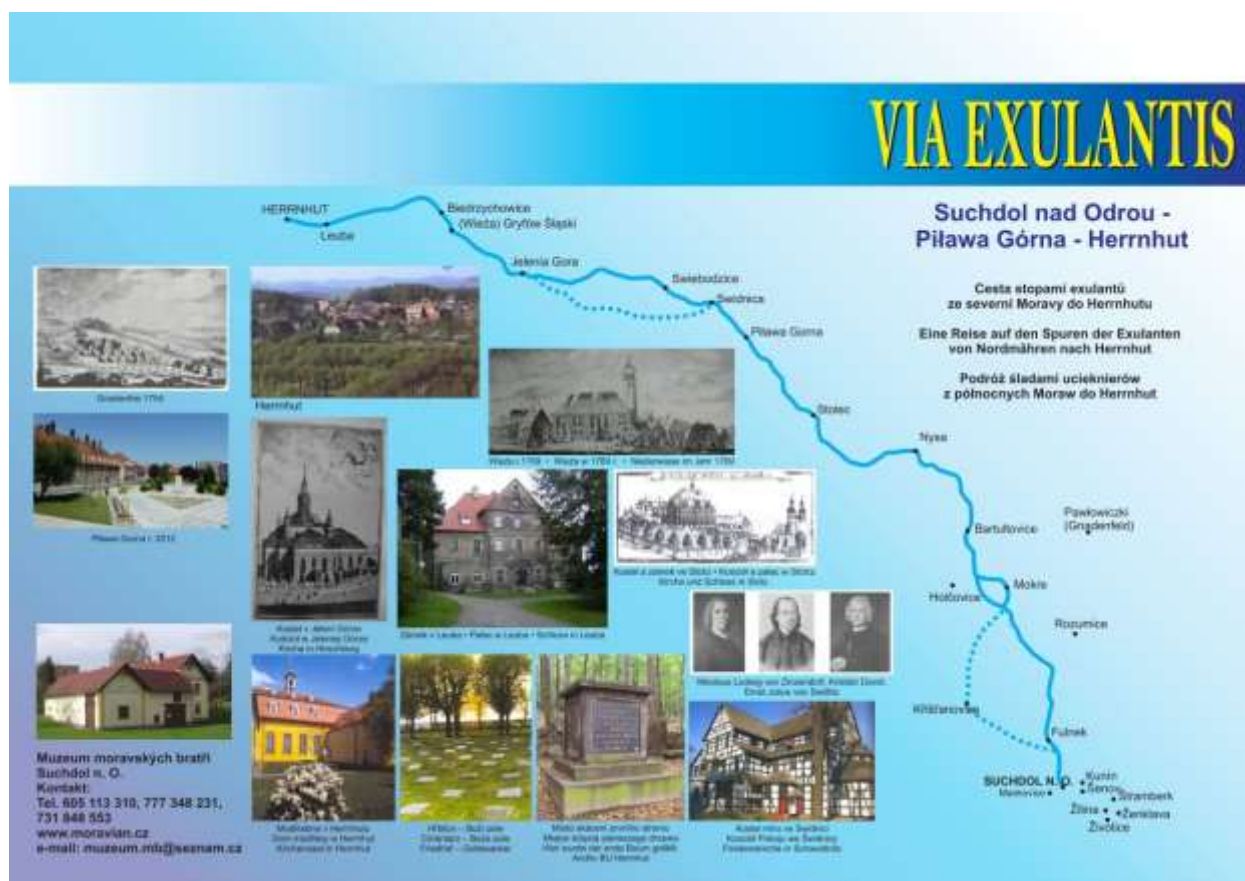
I put up a short comment and one reply is from Ales Sinuhet Pawlus: I felt this was worth sharing.

'The story with the Moravian Brothers is very powerful ... it is missing in Czech history textbooks. But in the world the Moravian brothers know. Especially in America but even in Greenland, Canada and England. And of course Germany where they were given asylum. The town of Herrnhut still exists today: home of the famous Herrnhut star, created by Moravians. Even in Berlin, there are still neighbourhoods where the Moravian spirit lives. Moravians from Suchdol and Fulnek (both in the Czech Republic today) made history. They didn't go to war, they didn't occupy foreign territory. They were humble as none of us could imagine. Yet they managed to address every culture across the world.'

In another entry on Facebook Google definitely got it wrong. According to the translation, people largely left Suchdol on foot but a few took their farm animals and cars. I suspect they meant 'carts' ... what do you think?

At the Heritage Day there will be maps of the Via Exulantis. If any of you are up for a long walk you can follow in the footsteps of these early refugees and get a signed certificate if you complete the pilgrimage.

Sr Mary Holmes







**“SOUL SISTERS”  
WIMBLEDON GARDEN PARTY  
SATURDAY 29 JULY 2023  
14.00**

**JOIN THE PARTY ON “HENMAN HILL”  
(aka, the Choir House Terrace &  
Gardens)  
For an afternoon of fun and fellowship.**

**There'll be strawberries & cream,  
and a glass or two of Pimms,  
Prosecco or Barley Water**

**All for £5.00**



**If you want to bring a picnic with you as well, please do so, there  
will be seating available.**

**In addition there'll be games and competitions with a special prize  
for the “Best Dressed Spectator”.**

**So get your “gladrags” on and we'd  
15:love to see you there!**

**Tickets available from  
Sisters Myra  
Dickinson, Ann Kernohan,  
Annette Woolford and Ruth Dacre.**



## FIRST STEPS JOINING US TOGETHER

Following the meeting on 4 June about the future of the MWA at Fulneck, those present felt that some initial steps should be taken to keep us connected to our national organisation.

It was agreed that the basic principles of fellowship, spiritual reflection and fund raising for our charities should continue. A decision was taken that the first steps should be that all those willing and interested could receive the MWA information by e mail. A suggestion was put forward that further developments could be discussed once everyone had been receiving the information for a while.

As one sister said "small steps on our journey", to participate with our sisters nationally. 17 sisters have requested the MWA papers so far. If you would like the information to come to you and you have not already put your name down please let me know. Also, if you do not have access to receive the information digitally then a paper copy can be sent.

May the grace of Christ, our Saviour,  
And the Father's boundless love,  
With the Holy Spirit's favour,  
Rest upon us from above,  
Thus may we remain in union,  
With each other and the Lord:  
And Possess in sweet communion  
Joys which earth cannot afford. MWA Hymn

May the Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another,

Sister Myra

### Craft Group

This group will meet at the home of Sr Vi on Wednesday 12 and 26 July.  
All are welcome.



### PROMS IN THE Paddock: SATURDAY 8 July: gates open at 18.00 for a start at 19.15

**Lower Wyke** invite all to this concert, starring Clifton & Lightcliffe Band and soloist Anne Tonks.



Tickets £6 available on the evening; children free. 7

# Calendar

## June

Thurs 29      09.45   Morning Prayers

## July

Sunday 2      14.30   Lovefeast and Holy Communion. Led by Br James Woolford.

Tues    4      19.15   Church Committee

Wed    5      04.30-22.30   Unity Prayer Day for Fulneck

Thurs   6      09.45   Morning Prayers

Sunday 9      10.30   Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.

Wed    12      14.00   Craft Group. At the home of Sr Vi.

Thurs   13      09.45   Morning Prayers

Sat     15      10.00   Who let the dads out.

Sunday 16      10.30   Morning Service led by Br Kenneth Evans.

Tues    18      19.30   Organ Recital.

Thurs   20      09.45   Morning Prayers

Sunday 23      10.30   Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.

Wed    26      14.00   Craft Group. At the home of Sr Vi.

Thurs   27      09.45   Morning Prayers.

Sat     29      14.00   Soul Sisters 'Wimbledon Garden Party'. Choir House terrace and gardens.

Sunday 30      10.30   Morning Service led by Br James Woolford. Followed by refreshments in the BB.

## August

Thurs   3      09.45   Morning Prayers

There will be a magazine in August this year.

Please submit material for the August edition to myself by **Friday 21 July**. Thanks, Mary.