

Fulneck Moravian Church Magazine

December 2023 & January 2024



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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Thanks to Hilary Smith this month we are dipping into a book by Duncan Wood about her late husband, Br Mike John Smith: the book draws on Mike's writings and weaves in his personal life, with some sections written by Hilary. This is one book in a series about Moravian ministers who were active in the British Province in the twentieth century.

Although Mike sadly died over 30 years ago, I know that many of you have fond memories of him. Duncan lived in Oldham and got to know Mike well while he was serving at Salem. He describes Mike as 'a rumbustious character ... with a keen sense of humour'.

Mike's father was a Catholic and his mother an Anglican: from his teenage years Mike moved to the Moravian Church, initially Hornsey in London, and yet throughout his Ministry the traditions of the Anglo-Catholic church influenced his thinking. Hilary offered an example from their time at Salem. After the Maudy Thursday service the church was cleared of anything ornate, no cloths or flowers. The congregation were then invited to sit in silence with only one light at the front. People then left in silence.

In the early 1980s one of Mike's writings directly addressed the topic in a paper titled 'English Moravians and the State Church'. He provided details of the long friendship that can be traced back to before the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). More currently he wrote of Moravian Ministers leading congregations to the Parish Church quarterly for Holy Communion. Interestingly, this

is an area that has arisen recently in some of Hilary's research; it seems likely that where Societies came together, they formed 'united flocks' to attend their local Parish Church for communion.

The book also offers extracts from an earlier paper (Minister's Conference 1978) which Duncan describes as quite provocative, as Mike states that he feels strongly that challenges need to be faced or the church will be 'doomed to a dishonourable extinction, and all the glories of the past will not save us.' In this paper Mike also argues that as the world faces many disasters, and thus perhaps a more significant figure for us to remember should be Comenius rather than Zinzendorf.

The book offers not only many insights into Mike's writing but also his personal life as a Minister. While still a student minister training at the Northern College they moved to Gomersal in October 1989, where he was then ordained the following year. Shortly after his ordination a PEC circular went out inviting Ministers to volunteer for service in the recently created Jamaican Province. They volunteered, were chosen and then were able to have a conversation with Pat & Estelle Craig (parents of Beth McOwat) who were on furlough from Jamaica and staying at Ockbrook.

Here Duncan hands over to Hilary who paints a fascinating picture of their work and some of the practical challenges of life in Jamaica. This part of the story illustrates the work they both undertook: Hilary was able to teach the local school children and translate letters in German sent to the Province from Herrnhut.

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

They returned to England in 1974, initially to Salem. In 1980 they moved across the Pennines to Horton, thus for Hilary moving so much closer to Baildon, her childhood home. Again, Duncan hands over to Hilary as Mike was diagnosed with myeloid leukaemia. In the summer of 1988 Hilary describes how they celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary with other ministers and spouses at the annual Yorkshire ministers' 'works' outing'. The funeral for Mike was at St Oswald's Church Little Horton on 2 March 1989.

During the difficult years of 1987/88 Mike went through a period of intense personal suffering. It was at that time that he wrote 'Some Prayers for the Dark Hours'. Mike opens this booklet by encouraging us to let the prayers into our hearts. 'Then, in your dark hours, you will not need to move, even to switch on the light.' For each prayer he offers some opening comments. For example, he introduces the Sanctus by saying that this prayer joins us not only with all Christ's people, but with the angels of God in their eternal worship:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
God of power and might,
heaven and earth
are full of your Glory.
Hosanna in the highest!

'British Moravian Ministers: Michael John Smith' by Duncan Wood is available on Amazon, along with his book about Francis Hugh Mellowes; he is currently working on one about Emily Shaw. Hilary has copies of 'Some prayers for the Dark Hours': if you are interested please ask her.

A warm thank you to Hilary for initially mentioning this book to me and then spending time sharing more of the story.

Sr Mary Holmes

TOY APPEAL

Our Toy Service is on **Sunday 17 December**. Please bring along new toys, if possible in unopened boxes. These will all be taken to St George's Crypt.



REFRESHMENTS AFTER CHURCH

I am sure we all enjoy refreshments after Church on the last Sunday of each month. For this to be successful, we need volunteers. The list for 2024 is now in the Bell Room so please sign up.

Mamma Mia, It's Christmas!

Soul Sisters Christmas Social



Tues 5th December, 7.30 in BB hall



Tickets £6 inc. drinks and 1 entry in the raffle
(see Ann, Annette, Myra or Ruth)

**Please bring something to add to the faith supper
and your disco shoes of course!**

Raffle – Quiz – Games – Carols

HOLY HABITS

Missional discipleship as a way of life.

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**

What an amazing gift the world was given when God gave us his son. He came into the world, like the rest of us, a helpless baby. Yet that baby held so much hope to those who lived in that time and over 2000 years later he is still with us. Through Holy Habits we can live as God would want us to.

As I write this I'm on holiday overlooking the Solway Firth and Holy Habits seems so far away but they aren't. We started with prayer earlier in the year. If we leave prayer at home when we're away or not at church, what does that say about our faith? The beautiful scenery I have the pleasure of seeing reminds me to be thankful to God for his creation and pray for those who find themselves in situations where they are unable to appreciate such gifts to us.

Biblical Teaching came next and we were encouraged to read the Bible as stories instead of individual passages. This can give so much more meaning to the familiar ones we have grown up with. The Bible shows us how we should live our lives but can be so easily forgotten until we arrive in church on Sundays. Also different translations use slightly different words that can help when trying to understand difficult passages.

One Holy Habit that we seem to have embraced more is eating together. We introduced this with a faith lunch in September and realised we were already doing this a lot already. From this came the idea that we should introduce each Holy Habit with a faith lunch so we are!

November saw us moving to gladness and generosity. This had Gloria and I completely stumped. At first it seemed obvious but as we read more widely about it, it was more than just giving our time and money. If we do it grudgingly then it's a chore and I've no doubt people would stay away from us if we moaned about everything we did. We all have our strengths and gifts and we should look to use these rather than end up doing things we aren't suited to. This doesn't mean we never do anything we don't want to but be aware of the impact we have on others if we don't do them gladly.

So, what's next? January brings us to Fellowship. The Greek word translated as Fellowship in Acts 2 is *koinonia*. This is all about sharing, caring and living out our faith in actions. It's more than sitting talking to each other round a cup of tea and biscuit. More about this next year!

Wishing you all peace at Christmas as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the hope and love He brought to us all. May 2024 bring us closer together as we explore more Holy Habits and challenge ourselves to grow individually and as a congregation.

Fulneck Christmas Festival 1st and 2nd December

The great way to start your Christmas celebrations.

The weekend starts with a brass band concert at 7.30pm in Fulneck Church with the Clifton and Lightcliffe Brass Band. You're welcome to turn up on the night or purchase tickets via the church Facebook page.

The festival peaks on Saturday with the school and church joining forces to provide fun for all the family. From 10.30am until 2pm come along to the school and see Santa, have your face painted, do some Christmas shopping and take part in some Christmas themed activities.

Contact pfa@fulneckschool.co.uk to get your ticket for this fantastic event.

Fulneck Church will be hosting their Christmas Tree Festival from 10.30am until 5pm when there will be carol singing in church. The many trees will be decorated on the theme of Christmas books and stories.

During the day, every two hours, starting at 10.30am the story corner will be open. Who doesn't like having a story read to them?

There will also be live music during the morning by the Pudsey Ukes.

Refreshments will be available throughout the event from the school and Boys Brigade Hall. Come along and share this special weekend with us.

If you can spare a few hours on the Friday evening or during the day on Saturday, then please sign up on the sheet in the Bell Room. If anyone wants to bake some cakes to have as part of the refreshments, we won't say no, but we mainly need your time.



The Holy Habit of Gladness and Generosity- how we shared it

In November we came together to share a faith lunch and talk about this habit. Those who were there were asked to write down things they thought had taken place at Fulneck over the past year that highlighted each of these. Gloria and I were expecting there to be some of the jobs that make sure the church services take place but we were totally wrong, in the best possible way.

What did come out was the overriding feeling of friendship and care for each other. How we have time for each other, checking how we are, how we have time to listen to each other. There was an appreciation of the sense of community we have, how children are forging new friendships, the beautiful countryside we are located in and the beautiful building we worship in. We didn't forget somethings that always brings us together and that is cakes, food and hugs!

Over our meal we had some interesting conversations about what we do at Fulneck and why and other things we could be doing in 2024 to bring us together and provide opportunities for others to join us. What an amazing response and it leads so well into the Fellowship Holy Habit.

Next Faith Lunch will follow Morning Service on Sunday 28 January.

Sr Allison Turner

A visit to Ockbrook

This summer I was invited to join a relatively new Provincial committee, initially set up at the 2021 Synod. It is the Archive and History Committee.

Our first face-to-face meeting was in November at Ockbrook. The busy agenda for the day included a settlement tour. Thanks to Alan McGibbon we all learned many interesting facts about how the settlement came in to being and developed. We walked from the top gate to the bottom gate and heard many stories.

One story that caught our attention was about the physician Dr Planta. He arrived at Ockbrook in 1780* and soon after his arrival he successfully vaccinated four girls against smallpox. This is sixteen years before the work of Edward Jenner, who is acknowledged internationally as developing the smallpox vaccine.

Here are two of the many photographs taken:



A large Moravian Star hangs all year in the Church and will be lowered during Advent.

* I have taken additional information about Dr Planta from a document by Sr Hilary Smith, titled 'Settlement Life at Ockbrook in the 18th century.'



This walk just below the Manse is known as the Bishop's Walk. Hence we had to send Sarah for a walk so we could then say 'a bishop walks along the Bishop's Walk'.

On a personal note it was a pleasure to meet others on this committee and thanks to all at Ockbrook who made the visit so productive and pleasurable. You won't be surprised to hear that refreshments and lunch were delightful.

Sr Mary Holmes

Please submit material for the February edition to myself by **20 January**. Thanks, Mary

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a good New Year. Mary



Calendar

November

Sunday 26 Nov	10.30	Morning Service. Br Trevor Kernohan
	18.00	Choral Festival led by the Moravian Singers. Fulneck Church Refreshments in the BB Hall after the concert .
Mon 27 Nov	14.00	Craft Group. Sr Vi's
Thurs 30 Nov	09.45	Morning Prayers

Calendar continued ..

December

Fri 1 Dec	19.30	Christmas Tree Festival launch: Clifton and Lightcliffe Brass Band. Church.
Sat 2 Dec	10.30	Christmas Tree Festival
	17.00	Carols in the Church
Sunday 3 Dec	14.30	Advent Sunday Lovefeast and Holy Communion. Br James Woolford.
Thurs 7 Dec	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 10 Dec	10.30	Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.
Wed 13 Dec	19.15	Church Committee
Thurs 14 Dec	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sat 16 Dec	10.00	Who Let The Dads Out. BB Hall
Sunday 17 Dec	10.30	Toy Service led by Br Bob Hopcroft.
	19.00	Nine Lessons and Carols led by Br Trevor Kernohan.
Thurs 21 Dec	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 24 Dec	10.30	Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.
	18.00	Christingle Service led by Br James Woolford.
Monday 25 Dec	10.30	Christmas Day Service led by Br James Woolford.
Thurs 28 Dec	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 31 Dec	10.30	Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.
	23.30	Watchnight Service led by Br James Woolford.

January

Thurs 4 Jan	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 7 Jan	14.30	Lovefeast and Holy Communion. Br James Woolford.
Thurs 11 Jan	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 14 Jan	10.30	Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.
Mon 15 Jan	15-21 January: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	
Wed 17 Jan	19.15	Church Committee
Thurs 18 Jan	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sat 20 Jan	10.00	Who Let The Dads Out. BB Hall
	10.00	District Fellowship Morning
Sunday 21 Jan	10.30	Morning Service led by Sr Cathy Gledhill.
Thurs 25 Jan	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 28 Jan	10.30	Morning Service led by Br James Woolford.
		Faith Lunch in the BB Hall will follow the service.