



Unity Information Newsletter

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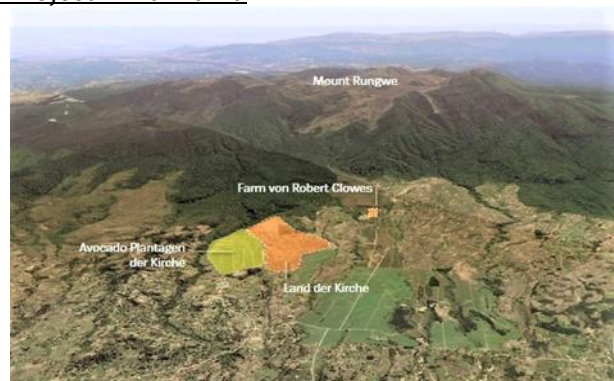
Ten Devotions Leading to Pentecost from South Africa

In the period leading up to Pentecost 2020, the Moravian Church in South Africa published ten devotions on their websites under the overall theme "The acts of the Holy Spirit" See [here](#). (1 The Holy Spirit lives in us. (2) The Holy Spirit gives us power. (3) The Holy Spirit intercedes and helps us pray... (4) The Holy Spirit teaches and reminds Christians of what Christ said. (5) The Holy Spirit sanctifies and helps us to obey God's Word. (6) The Holy Spirit helps Christians kill sin and convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin (7) The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts. (8) The Holy Spirit speaks, hears and has feelings (9) The Holy Spirit calls, sends people to work and appoint them to office. (10) Praise, prayer and worship - The individual texts were written by the bishops of the Unity Province of South Africa.



German Weekly News Magazine Reports on Avocado Project in Tanzania

"Der Spiegel", Germany's largest weekly newsmagazine, reports on a successful project that was jointly developed by the Moravian Church in Tanzania (Southern Province) and Moravian Mission Society in Germany. Under the headline "Avocado Cultivation in Tanzania - The Superfood Bet" Marius Münstermann and Christian Werner summarize in words and pictures how the project on the mighty "Mount Rungwe" (2,961 m) came about, what difficulties the people in charge had to overcome and with what reservations they still have to struggle. After the trees had to grow for three years, thousands of local smallholders can now harvest rich avocado on large areas of land belonging to the Moravian Church and on private land. An investor is helping to process the fruit and supply it to the world market.



Elections in Surinam

In the parliamentary elections in Surinam on May 25, 2020, the former opposition party VHP ("Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij" = Progressive Reform Party), led by Chandrikapersad Santokhi, emerged victorious. To the exact election results [here](#). President Desi Bouterse, who has been in office since 2010, had to put up with an unprecedented defeat with his NDP ("National Democratic Party"), which is primarily attributed to corruption and the high level of debt in the country. Long queues formed in front of the 639 polling stations, where the Corona protection regulations were partially suspended. Coalition negotiations are necessary to form a new government and to elect the president (two-thirds majority). The previous president was sentenced in 2019 to 20 years imprisonment in connection with the December murders from 1982.

Star Mountain in Palestine during the Corona Crisis



Sis. Ranya Francis Karam, the Director of the Moravian Rehabilitation Center on Starmountain (Palestine), has written a report for the many friends of the Centre around the world on how the Centre has dealt with the Corona crisis and



how it has managed the challenges. An early phase of lameness gave way to a second phase in which many new ideas sprouted and were realized. It turned out that digital forms of teaching and training are also for a possibility for people with disabilities. And it turned out that the Corona time of stay home were the ideal time for the staffmembers to renovate several rooms of the centre on their own and to clean up the centre's wide campus. "Where there is a will, there is a way. And all things are possible for the believer, especially in difficult times," the photo report concludes.

Covid-19 and the "Ahuas Clinic" of Moravian Church in Honduras

The Moravian Clinic in Ahuas (Honduras) on the Mosquito Coast, a structurally challenged region near the Atlantic, has been extremely busy during the Covid 19 pandemic. As early as March 2020, the government severely restricted the freedom of movement for the population. Although the virus has not yet reached the Mosquitia, travel restrictions meant that people who would otherwise have travelled to larger cities or clinics for treatment now went to the small "Ahuas Clinic". Therefore, the clinic needed emergency funding from March 2020 onwards, which was given by the North American Moravian Board of Worl Missions (BMW). This enabled the clinic to fully cover higher drug costs, additional costs for patient transport and increased treatment costs.

World Day of Prayer Review in Albania



Sis. Merita Meko, one of the three founders of the Moravian Church in Albania in the early 1990s and still a member of the Board, is the honorary Chairperson of the World Day of Prayer Committee in her country. In this capacity, she has written a report on the World Day of Prayer activities in Albania on 6 March 2020, listing 29 cities and villages where prayer services were held, mostly with preparatory meetings in advance. In total, 496 people were present in Albania, whenever possible in ecumenical fellowship, and they were enriched by the study of Zimbabwean history and culture and churches.

Sis. Merita Meko saw the greatest challenge in translating the extensive preparation material from English into Albanian. She added many pictures to her report (download in English [here](#)).

Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Palestine Receives Financial Assistance

It is thanks to the commitment of the the Danish Moravian Mission "Brødremenighedens Danske Mission" (BDM), that an amount of 2.2 million Danish Kroner (331,000 US) can be made available to the Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center (Palestine). The funds comes from the "Civilsamfund i Udvikling" (CISU), a public development aid fund that currently supports a total of 30 schools in the West Bank. Bro. Jens Peter Rejkjær, Secretary General of the BDM, writes: "I am pleased to inform you that the CISU has



approved our application for support for the Starmountain Rehabilitation Center. The aim of our extensive project is to support people with intellectual disabilities over the next two years in such a way that they can lead a life in greater dignity than before".

Moravians in Cuba – an update



Sis. Tania Sanchez-Fonseca, President of the "Junta Provincial" of the Moravian Church in Cuba, has written a detailed report on the life and work of her church for the English language magazine "Onward". In the letter, she describes the continuing internal and external growth of the church as well as about its efforts to work more and more into the secular Cuban society with social commitment. The report also talks about the Corona-related restrictions of public and church life. The employees in the communities are in close contact with

those members who need special help or a supply of food because they currently have no income. In Havana, in Matanzas and in Santa Clara several sisters produce and distribute mouth and nose masks. The complete report [here](#):

Unity Womens Desk: Call for a Logo Competition

Sis. Julie Tomberlin, Winston-Salem/NC, the head of the Unity Womens Desk, recently called for a logo competition (<https://www.facebook.com/unitywomensdesk/photos/pb.1693720077507708.-2207520000..2584491891763851/?type=3&theater>) The logo being sought is for the 5th Unity Women's Consultation to be held in Laurel Ridge and Winston-Salem in September 2022 under the theme "With Hearts and Hands and Voices". The deadline for submissions is 1 July 2020, and Sis. Julie Tomberlin writes: "Please help us create a logo for our next consultation. If you need some inspiring pictures, visit the Laurel Ridge Camp website and imagine women from around the world gathered there to join with hearts, hands and voices to worship, learn and plan together". The previous Unity Women's Consultations have taken place in 2016 in Paramaribo (Surinam), 2008 in Herrnhut, 2001 in Port Elizabeth (South Africa) and 1995 in Kernersville/NC (USA).



Moravian College in Jamaica Starts Information Campaign



During the Corona break, the "Bethlehem Moravian College" (BMC) in Malvern/St. Elisabeth on Jamaica started a digital information offensive to promote early registration at this traditional college. " Can there be any doubt Bethlehem is the College for you?" asks a trainee in a video clip (download [here](#)) in which she introduces this Moravian institution, founded in 1861. The variety of training courses offered by the college, which is beautifully situated on a hill and gradually modernised, is impressive. For some time now, it has devoted itself to computer and environmental sciences, in addition to human sciences and modern languages.

It is regarded a "showpiece" of the Jamaican Moravian Church, which has 63 congregations and has been working since 1954 as an independent Unity Province.

Declaration Regarding the Death of George Floyd

From the British Unity Province comes a statement on George Floyd in Minneapolis and the problem of racism. With permission from the British PEC, the Unity Board Administrators Office has published the statement and invited Moravians from the entire Unity to indicate, if they agree and to report that back to the UBA. Those, who agree will find their name under the statement. It is still possible to get your name on the list. Please find the statement on the Unity Website, (www.unitasfratrum.org). If you agree, please send an e-mail to boytler@ebu.de stating: "I agree to the statement on George Floyd and racism."

The statement reads: We abhor his murder and we offer our sincere sympathy to his family. Racism exists in our society and it can often go unrecognised. We are committed to take action to challenge all forms of racism. Everyone is equal and everyone is created in the image of God but centuries of racism have led to the perception that some lives are valued more than others. We call on all of our brothers and sisters to affirm and uphold one of the key tenets of the Moravian basis of faith that, "We oppose any discrimination in our midst because of race or standing, and we regard it as a commandment of the Lord to bear public witness to this and to demonstrate by word and deed that we are brothers and sisters in Christ." (Ground of the Unity).

On behalf of The Moravian Church in America, Northern Province (MCNP), the PEC President Rev. Dr. Betsy Miller has given a statement: <https://www.moravian.org/2020/05/i-have-called-you-by-name-a-message-from-the-rev-dr-elizabeth-miller/>

For a similar declaration of the European Continental Province: https://www.ebu.de/fileadmin/media/Direktion/Black_lives_matter_Erklaerung_UD.pdf

The Current Refugee Situation in Tanzania I

The Tanzanian statistics authority has published new figures on refugees in the country. Between 2017 and 2019, the total number of refugees living in Tanzania, some of whom have been living there for decades, fell from 359,400 to 329,600 to 278,000. At the end of May 2020, the figure had returned to 330,000. Around 80 per cent of African refugees move to a neighbouring country due to crises of any kind (armed conflicts, epidemics, weather or climate catastrophes, lack of economic prospects for young people); only 20 per cent dare to go to Europe or can afford to do so. Most of the refugees have recently come from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2014, Tanzania naturalized 162,200 Burundians who had been in the country since 1972 in a one-off action. Since 2017, between 44,000 and 60,000 Burundians (figures vary) have more or less voluntarily returned to their homeland.

North India, challenges in the time of the pandemic

Rev. Thsespal Kundan writes on the current situation in the Moravian Church in North India: On 20th April we began Online Lessons for our school pupils. It was a big challenge, but we arranged training of our teachers in the use of video conferencing platforms. Not knowing that a pandemic would cripple our traditional methods of teaching-learning, In March 2019 we had already started discussing ways of changing our methods and using technology and Internet based resources. In December 2019 we already began getting resources ready for the changes we felt were necessary. When the pandemic struck, we were already half-prepared, and we simply had to accelerate our preparation, organization and delivery. I joined the other academic administrators in teaching online. The Online lessons have been well received, although quite a few children are in homes without enough funds for a smartphone (let alone a tablet/computer/laptop). A significant number of boarders went back to their homes in the high mountains where there is no mobile/cell phone network (let alone Internet wifi). They are lagging behind the others, and we are thinking about bringing them back to the Institute campus, if the administration allows it and we can arrange transportation. In our neighborhood, it seems that word has spread about the good quality of our Online Lessons and a number of new pupils have joined us.

In May, our 16 College Students on campus did a free online course offered by Tata Consultancy Services. We hope that they will do more courses online in July. Four of them had gone to Chennai and



Bangalore for a 5-month Discipleship Training School. They were able to return to Dehradun on 7th June after the lockdown was partially lifted. Another Nursing student from Bangalore was able to return on 9th June. All have had to quarantine for at least 2 weeks before being allowed to interact with others.

Community transmission of Covid19 is increasing day by day to alarming proportions, primarily due to low rates of tracing and random testing. However, by the grace of God the fatality rate is lower than quite a few other countries. However, hospital (and bed, ICU, and ventilator) capacity is limited. At Moravian Institute, even though some people on campus feel confined, we are trying to observe the necessary precautions as strictly as possible. Fortunately, we have a large enough campus with plenty of space and fresh air, with facilities for games and sports. Even with 80+ people, the campus feels rather empty sometimes.

News in Brief

The Executive Committee of the All African Conference of Churches (AACC) adopted the document "Ten Theological Theses on COVID-19 in Africa". It is the conference's contribution to the ongoing theological reflections on the fight against the corona pandemic. Download the six page document [here](#).+++ The Synod of the Surinamese Province of the Moravian Church, planned for August 24-28, 2020, will due to the Corona crisis not place this year. The synodal period has been extended to August 2021 The Young Peoples Missionary Association (est. 1957) of the British Unity Province has published its 2020 fundraising project. The young people are asked to do something for the Moravian Church in Binnakandi (India, Assam) with small monthly amounts. The church there is in need of funds to improve the transport of children from rural areas to their school and to renovate the school building. +++ The Council for World Mission published a statement recalling the claim of the African-American George Floyd, who was killed in the USA, entitled "I Can't Breathe," which reflecting that black and minority ethnic communities, as well as migrant workers, are treated as cheap and disposable labor, frequently denied equal rights, wages and dignity. Download the statement [here](#).