



Unity Information Newsletter

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Begin of the Moravian Mission on August 21, 1732:



On August 21, 1732 the first two missionaries, Br. Leonhard Dober and Br. David Nitschmann departed from Herrnhut / Germany and left their home country to preach the gospel among slaves on the island of St. Thomas / Virgin Islands. Sis. Winelle Kirton-Roberts, Moravian pastor, who ministered on St. Thomas writes: "For many years I thought that the first two missionaries boarded a vessel on August 21 to begin a four-month

journey to the Caribbean. But I have learnt that it took them a month to get to Copenhagen from Herrnhut, a month before they left Copenhagen and two months before they reached "New Herrnhut" on St Thomas, Danish West Indies. August 21 reminds me of Dober's and Nitschmann's commitment to the call of God in spite of all the discouragement they received in Copenhagen, their determination to be like the enslaved Africans although they were white men, and their faith to believe that God will provide. I lived for 13 years at New Herrnhut and I took my young people annually to visit the site that the Moravians held their first service among the enslaved Africans. As I have been inspired, I encourage the youth to appreciate the sacrifice others have made and to see themselves today as bearers of good news".

Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center / Palestine Gets a New Minibus

Three organisations joined together to help Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center near Ramallah (Palestine) to get a new minibus for the transport of its students: Mission 21 from Switzerland, the "Ehmann Foundation" and the Moravian Mission Society (Herrnhuter Missionshilfe) in Germany. The new vehicle, a white Mercedes-Benz bus, was delivered on August 13, 2020 by the company "Gargourieh" in Ramallah to the delight of the few people who were present



due to Corona situation on Star Mountain. See [here](#). The management extend its sincere gratitude and appreciation all donors on behalf of those who will hopefully be able to use the transport lines of the facility again soon. Since none of the sponsored children and none of the young trainees live on the Sternberg, the vehicles of the institution are on the road in a wide radius every day.

New Kindergarten on Star Mountain / Palestine Nearing Completion

The construction of a new kindergarten for Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center near Ramallah in Palestine is approaching completion. Since the facility had to be closed at the beginning of the Corona crisis and is still closed, conditions are good for the continuation and completion of the individual construction measures. In the meantime, the ground floor of the new building has been completely plastered. The tiling and plastering work in the basement is also progressing. The electrical work and the construction of the sanitary facilities are also largely completed. And the last steps for the installation of the windows and doors have also been taken. All members of the management team believe that the children will be able to inaugurate the completely finished, safe and sustainable building in the near future.

Br. Godfrey Cunningham on the Corona Crisis in South Africa

The Moravian Mission organisation in Switzerland, "Mission 21", has published a report ([https://www.mission-21.org/fileadmin/Webseite Mission 21/ZeichenDerHoffnung/Corona Update 15 Suedafrika Mission 21.pdf](https://www.mission-21.org/fileadmin/Webseite_Mission_21/ZeichenDerHoffnung/Corona_Update_15_Suedafrika_Mission_21.pdf)) by Br. Godfrey Cunningham, Chairman of the South Africa Province since 2016. In it, Br. Cunningham addresses the difficult situation in his home country and the increasing poverty and violence. But he also talks about how he is still able to find hope despite all this. "Our Country is in a mess. That's the least that I can say," he writes and explains that 55% of South Africans are in dire poverty and therefore as vulnerable as the elderly. It remains unclear how the government can keep infection rates low and at the same time keep the economy running as country- wide testing reveals the true infection rate. The winter flu season raises the prospect of more infections that will reach a peak in the Spring (October). There is a growing number of Covid- 19 related deaths and a growth in gender-based violence."



Pictures from a School Trip to Aglona / Latvia



Towards the end of the summer holidays, the members of the boarding school community of the "Christian David School" (near Barkava) undertook a several-day excursion to Aglona in the south-eastern part of Latvia. The town is famous for its baroque pilgrimage church " Basilica of the Assumption", which was built between 1768 and 1780 on the site of a monastery founded by the Dominicans in 1699. Aglona is considered the spiritual center of the

Catholics in Latvia, which is otherwise rather Lutheran. Because the children who attend the "Christian David School", which was established nine years ago, come from very different churches and sometimes have no denominational background, the ecumenical expanse has been part of the school concept from the very beginning. The school not only owes its name to the Moravian Church, but also a Europe-wide network of friends.

Covid 19 Leads to Development Boost at the Moravian Institute / Northern India



The "Moravian Institute" in Rajpur near Dehradun (Northern India) writes on Face-book: "COVID-19 has accelerated Moravian's own process of reflection on its tasks as an educational institution. We have been reviewing more thoroughly than ever before our many fundamental assumptions about education: its aims, organising principles, methods. We are also thrilled to share results of the ICSE-10 and ISC-12 external exams for 2020 issued by CISCE on 10th July.

Once again Moravian Institute candidates achieved a full 100% pass result. The Moravian Institute has also contributed to the country's efforts in fighting COVID-19 and its adverse consequences. We also contribute to India's efforts to combat Covid-19 and its consequences. Moravian Institute has also distributed hundreds of cloth face masks to NGOs, fabricated in its Handicraft Centre en also, Rs.100,000 (1350 US\$) to the 'Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund' [here](#).

Ten Booklets in English for the Fight Against HIV/AIDS in South Africa

Through the traditional HIV/AIDS project of the community of brothers in South Africa called "Masangane" (Xhosa: We embrace each other), (<https://ems-online.org/en/projects/international-support/south-africa-masangane-aids-programme/>) many hundreds of people in the Eastern Cape have already found practical help and new courage to face life. The "Called to Care" toolkit from 2019 by the organisation "Strategies of Hope" has been used repeatedly in the project work. The project's activists are very keen to make the valuable tool-kit, which is available in English and French, better known than before so that it reaches and serves as many people with HIV/AIDS as possible. Booklet 6: "The Child Within" is based on a one-week workshop with helpers from the "Masangane" project. The other booklets are also extremely informative and practical. They are available [here](#) for free download or reading.



Br. Gregson Erasmus and Family Back to South Africa after Three Years Ecumenical Work in Germany



For three years Br. Gergson Erasmus from the Moravian Church in South Africa was an ecumenical worker in Germany, with a large part of the family at his side. He was employed at the Board for Mission and and Ecumenism ("Dienst für Mission, Ökumene und Entwicklung", DiMOE) in Stuttgart / Germany. On July 28, 2020, he was said goodbye from the ministry of the Württemberg Church to take up a

ministry with the Moravian Church in Cape Town. Pastor Heike Bosien, managing director of DiMOE, led the farewell service. "Your work here in south-west Germany was a blessing

for all," said Riley Edwards-Raudonat, former Africa officer of the "Evangelical Mission in Solidarity" ([EMS](#)), who delivered the sermon. Br. Gregson Erasmus's work at DiMOE focused on the topics of globalisation, Africa, mission history and North-South and South-South church partnerships. See: <https://ems-online.org/en/news/30-07-2020-2020/29-07-2020-a-blessing-for-all/>

Jamaica: Annual Women's Fellowships Day – in Times of Corona

The "Moravian Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands" had decided to celebrate its Annual Women's Fellowship Day despite the global pandemic. It took place on Sunday, July 12, 2020. The Moravian Church in Jamaica is one of the few Unity Provinces that is led by a sister: Sis. Phyllis Smith-Seymour. The theme of the celebration, in which the participants, apart from the speakers, wore masks, was: "Moravian Women on a Mission: Demonstrating Faith, Courage, Hope in Face of Covid 19". The festively dressed sisters gathered in the "New Beulah Moravian Church" in Mandeville, a rural congregation founded only in 1962. Two short videos of the festive service can be watched [here](#) and [here](#). A bishop's word from Jamaica on the occasion of the Corona crisis can be found [here](#).



Land Occupation in the Miskitia / Nicaragua

The German Embassy in Managua / Nicaragua learned that the invasion of colonists into the indigenous areas continues, especially in the area of the rapids of Sabakitang, from Musawas three hours down the Waspuk River. The Alal region, which sees movements into their area already since January 2020, was invaded by a large number of colonists, which means: land occupation, land sale, destruction of the forest, less space for Mayanna agriculture and even theft of the crops, development of infrastructure in the occupied territories: schools, churches etc. In the region further upstream in Wilu, new colonists keep showing up. In addition, armament is increasing on all sides, especially among the colonists, who carry relatively heavy weapons. "Ministerio del Ambiente y los Recursos Naturales de la República de Nicaragua", police, courts, "Batallón Ecológico" mostly watch, sometimes join in".

Call from West Indies East: Use the Crisis as an Opportunity!

The newsletter of the Eastern West Indies Province for August 2020 contains a passionate appeal by Susan Beaumont to see the Corona crisis not as a danger but as an opportunity. In her article (download [here](#) - page 4f), under the sub-heading "Use the Disorientation" she says: All innovation begins with disorientation. People must let the old status quo fail before we can embrace innovation. We should acknowledge that the status quo failed us some time ago. We've been falsely clinging to the old normal because there was too much pain in letting go. Now, we have no choice but to let go of the old normal. We cling to our old experiences, although we know that those will not serve us adequately moving forward. It would be a mistake to shore up the old structures and practices as things get "back to normal." We need to take advantage of this moment to let old things die, to experiment, to take risks and learn".

The "Sea-Watch 4" Sets Off / Europe

On August 14, 2020, the "Sea-Watch 4", the ship equipped by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), set off on its first mission to save the lives of refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. "Médecins Sans Frontières" is on board to provide medical support for the mission with a team to provide emergency medical care for the rescued. Meanwhile, the situation in the Mediterranean could hardly be more dramatic. Nearly all operational rescue



vessels are either bogged down in Italy because of alleged safety deficiencies or are prevented from deploying by many and various requirements. There are daily reports of maritime emergencies. After its departure, the "Sea-Watch 4" is the only civilian rescue ship in the Mediterranean. And it is to be feared that she will also be detained after her first deployment. Public attention could protect the ship. See <https://www.united4rescue.com/mitmachen> .

Benjamin William Mkapa Died / Tanzania

On July 23, 2020, Benjamin William Mkapa, the third President of the United Republic of Tanzania (1995-2005) and long-time confidant of the first President Julius Nyerere, died unexpectedly. In coordination with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, he gave the acquired state economy a market economy orientation and privatised about 400 state-owned enterprises. After his term of office, he proved himself as a diplomat in difficult mediation negotiations, e.g. in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda and Southern Sudan. For him, a Christian, dialogue was the only way to pacify and eventually overcome hostilities. Parallel to his time as President of the Republic, he served as Chairman of the "Party of the Revolution" (Chama Cha Mapinduzi / CCM). After the death of Benjamin William Mkapa, the government of Tanzania ordered a seven-day national mourning.

News in Brief

On the occasion of 13th August, 1727, the birthday of the Renewed Moravian Church in Berthelsdorf and Herrnhut (Germany), the "Moravian Historical Society" in Nazareth/PA in the USA reminds of the rich offer of Moravian souvenirs in their webshop. See [here](#). + + + On August 14, 2020 it was exactly 100 years ago that the descendants of the pastor and social democrat Christoph Blumhardt the Younger (1842-1919) donated the Kurhaus (spa) in Bad Boll / Germany together with the adjacent extensive estates to the Moravian Church. A text about it as well as many pictures [here](#) and [here](#) (please click on "600 Jahre"). + + + + A brass choir greeted the children in the morning of this year's children's festival in the Moravian congregation in Elim – very close to the Cape of Needles, the southern tip of Africa. A video with the brass choir [here](#). The Children's Festival in South Africa is usually celebrated in August, in memory of the children's revival in Herrnhut on August 17, 1727. Two photos of the Children's Festival [here](#). + + +

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